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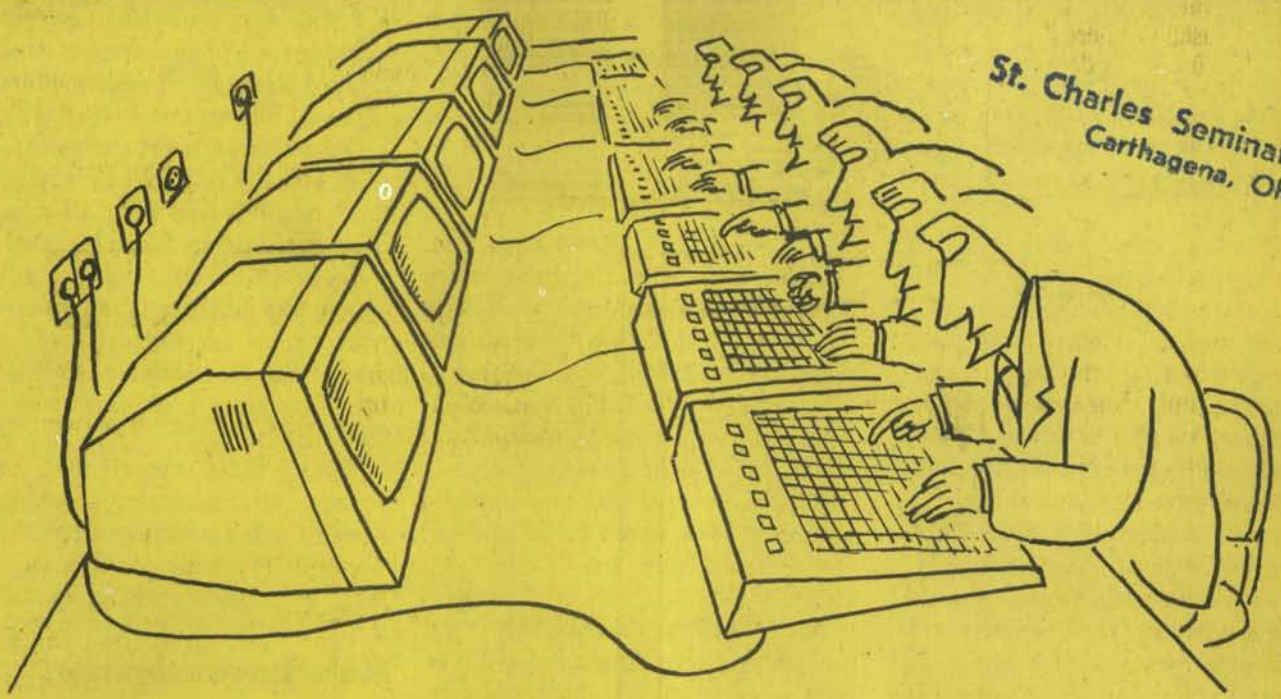
COMMONWEAL



St. Charles Seminary Libr
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EDUCATION ISSUE

SCHOOLS FOR WHISTLE BLOWERS
Carl Mitcham

THE POLITICS OF SEX EDUCATION
Karen Sue Smith

Inner-city Catholic Schools
David E. DeCosse

Promise of College Sports
Mark Naison

PLUS: THE LATEST COLEMAN REPORT ON HIGH SCHOOLS

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CORRESPONDENCE

Curran the scapegoat

Jamestown, N.Y.

To the Editors: It is surprising that John P. Hale in "Where He Started & Where He Stands" [January 30] gives so much weight for the conditions of our present world to artificial contraception. He disregards all the other contributing factors and dilemmas facing the younger generation:

1. The "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die" complex caused by the ever-present nuclear threat.
2. The medical evidence published in the 1960s which stated that homosexuality is not a mental disease, but rather a variation in human make-up.
3. The realization by women that they do not have to submit to their husband's battering and infidelities in order to "save" their marriage.

Humanae Vitae has been in force since 1968 and has proven to be impotent regarding the behavior of people today, whether those people are Protestants and others who do not know about *Humanae Vitae*, or Catholics who do.

So now the pope, Cardinal Ratzinger, and John P. Hale are looking for a scapegoat for all the world's problems and have settled upon Charles Curran! This case against Charles Curran is based on a false premise.

THERESA M. LETTIERI

Hale the prophet

Oklahoma City, Okla.

To the Editors: I suggest Mr. Hale's article should have been subtitled "The Trashing of Curran" since that is exactly what the article does. It attributes positions to him which are not his, and then proceeds to attack him with the zeal of an Old Testament prophet. Nowhere in the article do I find an accurate statement of Father Curran's actual position, a caring, carefully nuanced, pastorally oriented carefully nuanced, pastorally oriented one on the very sensitive, vexing matters covered in the article. Fairness, it seems, would require at least that.

The real case against Father Curran is that he is an American priest who tried to lighten the load on the backs of the faithful and that is *verboten*.

MARSHALL J. ELLET

Hale the servant

Rowayton, Conn.

To the Editors: What a splendid service John P. Hale has rendered us! Now at last, thanks to him, we know the *real* reason for abortion, broken homes, broken marriages, escalating homosexuality, premarital sex, teenage pregnancy, and starvation in the developing nations.

The culprit is artificial contraception, what else? How stupid we've all been, not to perceive this chain of cause-and-effect.

But if artificial contraception is the root of these evils, might it not also be responsible for the federal budget deficit? For our foreign trade deficit? For insider trading on Wall Street? For the drug epidemic? For the collapse of our steel industry?

MITCHELL KELLER

Curran in chaos

Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Editors: John P. Hale would do better to trace the development of Father Charles Curran from Vatican II, rather than from the discussions and commission that existed between the council and *Humanae Vitae*.

Vatican II adjusted the statement of the relationship between the purposes of marriage, giving official recognition to the discussion that had continued for over a decade earlier and expressing difficulty with the traditional distinction between primary and secondary ends of marriage.

Humanae Vitae's fatal flaw was not that it reiterated the traditional condemnation of contraception, but that it did so in terms that recognized neither the earlier development nor the established difficulty with the language it revived.

Charles Curran and others were left not with a reformulated, established teaching but a pronouncement on a discredited basis. . . . Inability or unwillingness to address that resulted in chaos.

Charles Curran has not been dissenting from a clearly established teaching, but laboring, however adequately or inadequately, to formulate a sexual morality to provide direction amid present confusion. The difficulty of the endeavor is reflected in his support from other theologians who, while not agreeing with him, recognize the problems with their own study.

History better supports the view of Charles Curran as the struggling loyalist, working within guidelines established by responsible Catholic consciences.

(MSGR.) HOWARD B. BASLER

Hale intransigent

Piedmont, Calif.

To the Editors: Is Hale serious? His "sorrowful picture" of Father Curran's slide down the slopes of total rejection of "the church's" teachings on morality is built on the kind of thinking and faulty theology which betrays his East-coast Jansenism, with its lowest possible view of

(Continued on page 221)

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COMMONWEAL

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Uncivil targets

"An accounting is needed." This was not the president demanding that Poindexter or North step forth. It was not the secretary of state ferreting out the Sultan of Brunei's lost $10 million. It was not the secretary of defense seeking an explanation from Israel of the Pollard spy case. Perhaps such questions don't occur spontaneously in the executive branch these days. It was rather the Senate majority leader, Robert Byrd (D-W. Va.), speaking in the interest of the nation last month. He called for a moratorium on future funding for the *contra* war in Nicaragua until fundamental questions concerning U.S. policy and practice have been answered satisfactorily. While Senator Byrd's summons failed to derail the final $40 million installment previously approved by Congress for the *contras* this fiscal year, his demand for an accounting will define the tone of discussions in the future, especially this fall when the administration requests renewed funds for its Nicaragua war.

That six-year-old war (the "American war" as Pakistani observer Salman Rushdie refers to it almost casually in his report from Nicaragua, *The Jaguar Smile,* Viking, 1987) is at a critical juncture. Even though President Reagan may be slumping in his driver's seat, he enters the final lap of his presidency at the wheel of a vintage, lumbering Imperial: he can maintain a heavy foot while intently steering a terrifying and nearly impervious course. There are those ideologues shouting encouragement in his ear all the while — Max Singer: "A U.S. invasion [of Nicaragua] . . . should require less than a week and fewer casualties than would result from a continuation of the civil war" (*National Review,* February 13), and Pat Buchanan: "The Ortega regime ought not to survive the Reagan presidency" (*Newsweek,* March 30).

Meanwhile, in deadly earnest, the CIA is giving the *contras* detailed diagrams for destroying American-built dams, bridges, and communications systems throughout Nicaragua this spring. These are *civil* targets, constructed with American help during the Somoza dictatorship (what we have given, we will take away); they are to be destroyed in a last-ditch effort to debilitate the ruling Sandinista regime. If the reports are true (*New York Times,* March 19), they are reminiscent of the 1984 CIA mining of Nicaraguan harbors, condemned last year by the World Court. An accounting must be rendered.

There is a stench in this terrorist plan, as there is in the entire conduct of the Reagan-*contra* war. That sordid record includes not only the mining of harbors, but an apparent breach of the Neutrality Act and the Arms Export Control Act by private U.S. citizens, a form of vigilanteism encouraged by the Reagan government. It includes the state department's payments to an advertising firm to lobby Congress on the *contras'* behalf, a possible violation of U.S. law. It runs to even more sulfurous levels in the unaccounted-for $27 million of nonlethal aid approved in

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1985, the millions solicited from the Saudis, and the *contra*-Casey-North connection which will come to fuller light next month in congressional hearings. It is reflected in the moral lassitude of the *contra* group itself, facing seven independent investigations in the U.S., including drug smuggling, and in the disparaging withdrawal of Arturo Cruz from the *contra* leadership. And its most reprehensible manifestations continue daily in the indiscriminate killing of civilians by the *contras*, the kidnappings, forced recruitments, attacks on cooperatives, slitting of babies' throats, mining of roads, and murder of more than 100 health workers since 1983 (see the Americas Watch report *Human Rights in Nicaragua*, February 1987).

This is not to say the Sandinistas are without sin. As the famous Nicaraguan poet Pablo Antonio Cuadra, now *persona non grata* with the Sandinistas, wrote many years before the fall of Somoza:

Whichever way we turn, we meet
Beasts lying in wait.

That is the sad song from *Nicaragua libre:* the suppression

Your audit: A guide for the perplexed

Being audited is not the sort of thing you want to broadcast, generally. I should know. But I feel a compulsion to help others get ready for the inevitable. Here are a few tips.

1. How to avoid an audit.

Don't employ my former accountant. For years I went along blissfully ignorant that I could deduct anything. Nobody even bothered to tell me I could write off research expeditions, or depreciate my library. Finally, I heard whispered in the faculty lounge the name of Frankie "Fast Track" Folsom.

Fast Track kept saying things like, "We should take an aggressive posture. They only audit one in thirty-three tax forms." Or, "The thing to remember is that in tax law nothing is black or white. You want to stay in the gray area." From Fast Track I learned to deduct entertainment expenses, business lunches, and some slightly puffed "office supplies."

FAST TRACK: What about laundry bills?

ME: How can I deduct laundry bills?

FAST TRACK: You must have a rug in that study, and it must have gotten dirty.

2. How to behave during your audit.

I was armed for battle. After all, I was comfortably in the gray area, albeit in an aggressive posture. "Fast Track" told me to be prepared to give a little but to hold firm on the big ticket items. I crammed for the audit the way I did for my doctoral orals.

As on my doctoral orals, there were several surprises. Instead of facing a leviathan I met a nice lady who was genuinely distressed that a young man like me would (a) go to Fast Track Folsom ("We see his signature on a lot of audited forms"), and (b) would keep such sloppy records.

Fast Track was right and I could deduct "Professional Reading" but wrong that anything I bought would qualify. Mrs. Murphy asked me how I made professional use of the real estate section of the Sunday *Times* and why I needed *Rolling Stone*. We split the difference: I could not take off the full $75 for the *Times*, but I could deduct my subscription to *Rolling Stone*. ("Well, I find all sorts of examples of poor writing to show my students, plus I note current illustrations of pastoral, and effects of the Great Vowel Shift.")

The second time Mrs. Murphy patted me on the shoulder and said, "Dear, you simply must keep better records" I realized that she and not Fast Track had my best interests at heart. I began saying things like, "It's just too complicated for anybody to keep straight, Mrs. Murphy, and I've never been very good at numbers."

MRS. MURPHY: Tell me about this deduction of $150 for loss due to accident.

(Well, I hadn't pulled anything fishy there, like my friend Arnold the Unscrupulous, who reports a stolen wallet to the police every MLA convention and deducts several hundred bucks every April. None of that here. Although, if pressed, I was prepared to plea-bargain: Arnold's last name for complete immunity.)

ME (confidently): Oh, that's the broken china. See, my wife was teaching at Smith and I moved there for my leave and I rented a U-Haul to get our stuff back home in June and it was a hot day and I had to unload the entire truck myself because my wife's back was out of kilter. And when I got the entire truck unloaded except for the dishwasher I felt kind of sprightly and I bounced off the loading platform for a lemonade and the bounce started the dishwasher rolling out the truck.

MRS. MURPHY: What exactly was the hundred and fifty dollar loss?

ME: Oh, the dishes. See I talked my wife into loading the china into the dishwasher instead of hand-packing every darn one of them. I figured it was safer and we could just

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last year of *La Prensa, La Iglesia,* and *Radio Catolica;* the expulsion at the same time of two Catholic churchmen without due process; a system of political courts which return verdicts of guilty-as-charged 99 percent of the time; the harassment of non-Sandinista labor unions; the recent arrest of protesters on International Women's Day; the 200,000 Nicaraguan citizens who have fled to Honduras and Costa Rica, a chorus in exile; and the postponement of promised local elections this year until, perhaps, 1987. While Americas Watch states that the Sandinistas do not systematically violate citizens' rights, the Sandinistas nevertheless substantiate Orwell's dictum that "All revolutions are failures, but they are not the same failure."

Understanding this, the Congress must make some highly creative proposals in its discussions in the months ahead. It should take advantage of the curious but useful sensitivity of the Sandinistas, even at this date, toward outside public opinion, including U.S. opinion (as Joseph Davis points out in the January-February issue of *Nicaragua in Focus*). While Senator Byrd was calling for accountability, the Senate was

---

wheel the whole bunch of them into the kitchen. But then my jump off the loading platform started the whole dishwasher rolling out of the truck, and I was standing in the yard watching while the whole darn thing went CRASH! out of the truck. My wife was really whizzed until I told her we could at least deduct the loss.

MRS. MURPHY: Oh dear, I'm afraid you can't take a deduction on a loss caused by your own negligence.

ME: Well, "negligence" is a little harsh. You see the truck was parked on a slight incline and I didn't really bounce all that hard off the landing platform — now that I think of it, I probably just stepped a little forcefully off the platform.

MRS. MURPHY: I'm afraid the regulations are very clear on this point.

She was also unreceptive to my argument that it was absolutely necessary to entertain the department chairman for supper, or that there was no other time to discuss with colleagues the survey course except at business lunches. I did get the *Rolling Stone* deduction and the meals for research expeditions that, strictly speaking, weren't 100 percent devoted to the pursuit of learning in Widener Library.

The bottom line was I owed the IRS $276.

3. How to conduct yourself after an audit.

Unless you are an altruist like myself, don't tell anybody that you were audited. Being audited is like being indicted: everybody knows there is a very important distinction between being charged with wrongdoing and being found guilty of it, and nobody bothers to remember the distinction. Another way an audit is like an indictment is that nobody will ever forget that you were nabbed.

In my case I had a little extra problem. As it happened, I was called in by the IRS for the previous year's tax forms, *after* I had already submitted the current year's. Naturally, encouraged by Fast Track, I had made exactly the same deductions (entertainment, lunches, the whole Sunday *Times*).

Whammo! I got audited two years in a row.

Never mind that the second time around I dug out enough legitimate deductions to warrant a refund. I actually got over a hundred bucks back from the IRS, even with what Mrs. Murphy termed the sloppiest bookkeeping she'd seen in years.

Did anybody remember that I got a refund? No. I'm the slimeball who got audited two years in a row, the one people call up with questions when they're venturing into the gray area.

COLLEAGUE: Hey Bob, you've had a lot of experience with this kind of thing. Do you think I can deduct my wife's mother as a dependent?

ME: I thought Nancy's mother was dead.

COLLEAGUE: Technically, yes, but I still think of her as a burden. What are the chances this would send the old computer tilting?

Being audited is rare enough that it marks you, no matter how large a refund you got. Two of my friends have told me that they have Herpes, and believe me, I haven't forgotten it.

But with that, we're getting into the gray area.

ROBERT H. BELL

Robert H. Bell teaches English at Williams College and is a regular contributor to (tax exempt) Commonweal.

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voting 97-1 in support of Costa Rican President Arias Sanchez's plan for a Central American peace accord. That plan bears resemblances to the efforts of the Contadora group. That the Senate voted its support for the Arias plan, if only in principle, indicates a significant bipartisan leaning in Congress toward a negotiated regional settlement, even by those who so recently voted appropriations for the *contras*. This consensus must be fortified and enhanced in the immediate future. It will face a determined president in the fall.

Inducing change in Nicaragua and bringing peace a step forward in Central America can best be achieved by a united front of Nicaragua's neighbors, the U.S., and its allies. This change will not be advanced through terrorism or military offensives, but through the leveraging of political, economic, and moral constraint. By resisting the military option, the U.S. and those who share its interests will save themselves the brutal wounds of Afghanistan and Vietnam. Their example will encourage Managua in saner policies at home which will allow Nicaraguans much needed self-reflection. After six years of war, it is worth the effort. As the poet Cuadra told the *New York Times Magazine* (March 29): "I have always felt that the Nicaraguan has a great capacity to see his own reflection, to see the reality and save himself." Our Congress should encourage that process. In so doing, it will help us save ourselves.

WATER FROM THE ROCK

This is the season when we retell the biblical story of a Jewish man and a Samaritan woman who broke with convention merely by speaking and listening to one another. Beside a well in a desert oasis, the two naturally focused their conversation on water and thirst, concerns they held in common at that moment. On a deeper level, however, the encounter was a signal event, pointing to the power of reconciliation. It showed that even the most ancient hatreds and embedded prejudices among peoples — over gender, race, tribe, or religion — can, indeed, be transformed.

Today, on a hundred-acre parcel of land, half-way between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, a small but growing community of Jews, Muslims, and Christians practice living together as equals, a testament to the possibility of cooperation and full partnership in a region wrenched by war. Twenty-three adult residents and as many children struggle together to understand one another's languages, cultural histories and identities, and to respect each other's differing political aspirations and perspectives on the conflicts that daily impinge upon them. The village is called Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam, which means (in Hebrew/Arabic) Oasis of Peace. Ironically, this oasis of peace borders the Israeli-occupied West Bank and overlooks the Valley of Ayalon, a bloody battlefield where Jordan and Israel clashed notoriously in 1948. The community, founded in 1972 by Fr. Bruno Hussar, a Jewish convert to Catholicism, is situated on land leased from the Trappist monastery at Latrun.

The goals of the community may appear modest at first — the promotion of equality and intercultural coexistence — yet in the experience of Israeli citizens, some 600,000 of whom are Arabs, these goals have been seen as either miraculously conceived or highly suspect. Nevertheless, the methods employed by Neve Shalom's outreach program, the School for Peace, have attracted international interest and even acclaim. Last month, the prestigious Buber-Rosensweig medal was awarded to the community "in appreciation of the endeavors and merits of Jewish-Arab cooperation and the aim of peaceful coexistence."

Since 1980, some 8,000 young people and 1,000 adults in mixed Arab-Jewish groups have participated in an assortment of intensive, live-in workshops at the School for Peace:

- A three- to four-day encounter for Arab and Jewish youth is designed to explicate the complexity of the Arab-Jewish issue, challenge stereotypes, and teach skills for living with conflict such as non-discriminatory behavior and a more democratic world-view. More advanced courses are given to graduates of introductory workshops, youth leaders, and educators.
- A three-stage program for rural Arab women is designed to build a support network and to train local leaders as effective change agents. These women, who struggle within often hostile patriarchal family systems, need extra encouragement.
- Intensive courses in Arabic language include rudiments of Palestinian folklore and culture.
- A one-year joint leadership project trains volunteers as counselors in Jewish-Arab encounters.
- Six weekend meetings survey the historical-political situation today, and create a joint Jewish-Arab group that can work cooperatively toward political goals.

A project is being proposed to assist Arab students preparing for university life in Israel.

Neve Shalom/Wahat Al-Salam faces head-on the most sensitive Arab-Jewish issues, yet it does so by first creating a climate of trust essential to open discussion of high quality. However, not every topic can be dealt with as yet, even in this democratic, egalitarian community. People must be receptive first, and sometimes the children of the resident families are ready before the adults.

Last year, when Israeli independence day was imminent, the children decided that since waving the Palestinian flag is unlawful in Israel, and since the Arabs in the community are Israeli citizens, they would hang the Israeli flag off-center, leaving a space where the flag of Palestine should go.

Neve Shalom fosters dialogue across cultural chasms; it practices respect and reconciliation. But members know how minute and brief are their efforts to change the attitudes of young people who follow upon generations of animosity. Fortunately, the clamor for the expertise of this small, unique community shows that the thirst to transcend ancient prejudices may yet be quenched, drop by drop.

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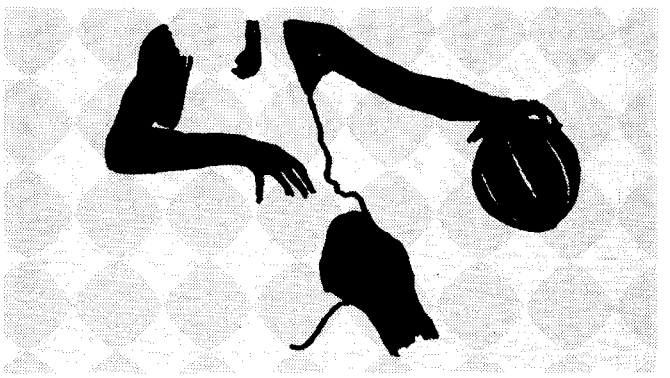
A FAILED GAME PLAN
SHOOTING FOR LASTING GOALS

In the lives of America's poor, no institution plays a more visible role than sports. On a typical winter's day, a drive through low-income neighborhoods in big city America offers poignant and unforgettable images: touch football games at 11 P.M., played amidst speeding cars and broken bottles; nonstop basketball games on hoops made of crates attached to fences; baseball and soccer games played on vacant lots surrounded by abandoned buildings. Like the street life and the drug traffic, the game never stops — it's life, it's art, it's hope.

To the observer of American sports, none of this is surprising. Our most popular athletic heroes have often gained their energy fighting the demons of poverty and marginality: Babe Ruth, Joe Louis, Jackie Robinson, Larry Bird — products of orphanages, ghettos, single parent families — all turned early handicaps into a badge of honor. But in America of the 1980s, the athletic road from marginality to wealth and status is not only more complex and competitive, increasingly it becomes one of the few remaining avenues for making the journey. Other paths to mobility — less glamorous but more certain than sports — have sharply diminished for lower-income Americans.

We are only beginning to understand the full consequences of deindustrialization, of the destruction of employment opportunities based on physical strength and mechanical skill. There are many communities in the United States where there is a total mismatch between the educational level and cultural values of the population, and the employment opportunities of the local labor market. Young people hardened by a poverty not that different from generations before them, can no longer use their street smarts and physical strength in construction, mining, transportation, or the production of basic commodities on the scale of the past; rather, they must somehow transform themselves into computer programmers, word processors, list-makers, accountants, and advertising copywriters, exchanging the verbal jousting of street corners and schoolyards for the soft tones of office discourse. Needless to say, for people whose families have been locked in poverty for generations, whose neighborhoods have been abandoned by the literate, the civic minded, and the upwardly mobile, this transition seems unlikely and even undesirable. John Wideman's memoir of his imprisoned brother, *Brothers and Keepers* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1984) explains why:



> See. Ain't none of us out there in the street crazy. We know what's going down. We look around and what do we see? Homewood look like five miles of bad road. Ain't nothing happening, we see that. We know it. So what we supposed to do? Go to church like the old folks? Be O.J. or Dr. J.? Shit. Ain't everybody in the street crazy. We see what's going down. We supposed to die. Take our little welfare checks and be quiet and die. That ain't news to nobody. It's what's happening every day in Homewood. Them little checks and drugs. What else is out there? The street out there. The hard ass curb. That's why the highest thing you can say about a cat is he made his from the curb. That's a bad cat. That's a cat that took nothing and made something. When a dude drives up in a big hog and goes in the bar with a fox on his arm and drops a yard on the counter, he's bad. Got to be bad. What else be he but bad if he made all his shit from that hard rock.

In the world Wideman describes, sports represents one of the few labor markets that is accessible. Among welfare, drugs, hustling, and sports, the latter is the only one that combines glamour with resources and respectability. So the rags-to-riches theme in sports, an ancient American saga, has a new and special poignancy. Whereas once people entered sports to escape backbreaking, dead-end jobs, now poor people use sports to escape economic obsolescence and criminality.

Harry Edwards has argued ("The Collegiate Athletic Arms Race" in *Fractured Focus: Sport as a Reflection of Society*, Richard Lapchick, ed., Lexington Books, 1986), that the athletic labor market is an irrational place to focus one's energy:

> There is disturbingly consistent evidence that the black athlete who blindly sets out to fill the shoes of Dr. J., Reggie J., Magic J., Kareem Abdul J., or O.J. is destined to end up with 'No J' — no job whatever — that he is qualified to do in our modern technologically sophisticated society. At the end of his sports career, he is not running or flying through airports like O.J. He is more likely to be sweeping up airports — if he has the good fortune to land even that job.

The low graduation rates of black athletes in revenue producing sports bears out Professor Edwards's warnings of the pitfalls of intercollegiate athletics. But one is still haunted by images of thousands of kids in poor neighborhoods working to perfect their athletic skills, under the most adverse conditions imaginable. Why are they working so hard? Are they victims of false consciousness? Dupes of media hype and racist man-

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ipulation? Is what they are doing a complete waste of time?

The explanation is far more depressing. What they are doing is a *rational* response to the objective opportunities before them. What if the atmosphere in their families, schools, and peer culture is so contradictory to the values of the mainstream society that they know, from an early age, that they are unlikely to enter the middle class through education? What if everyone who achieves success that way leaves the neighborhood? What if no one in their family has a unionized blue-collar job, or has accumulated the education and sophistication to work in an office? What if the people who are most involved with children in their neighborhood, who give them love, attention, discipline, and opportunities are the coaches and community center directors and teachers who double in those roles?

Sad to say, organized sports, from high schools through the professional ranks, may be the only mainstream institution that actually needs the labor of low-income youths. They are not needed in factories, not needed in offices, and increasingly not even needed in the high-tech army. But the skills that enable them to survive in their neighborhood — guile, creativity, toughness, ferocity — make them superior athletes. And in America today, sports is an unparalleled marketing device. It sells television time. It sells consumer products. To an increasing degree, it sells institutions of higher learning. Universities invest tens of millions of dollars in stadiums, arenas, and training facilities. Athletic departments offer salaries that dwarf those of university faculties. Boards of trustees discuss the recruitment of blue chip athletes as though the economic viability of great institutions rested on the shoulders of eighteen-year-old athletes. The shameless commercialism of American higher education was displayed to telling effect when the NCAA recently announced that it was suspending football at Southern Methodist University for one year. Not only were prominent citizens embarrassed by the disclosure of their involvement in the S.M.U. affair. Within a week of the announcement, recruiters from 130 different schools descended on the campus to lure the stranded players to their home institutions. In an atmosphere reminiscent of a slave auction, the young athletes were able to sell themselves to the highest bidder, the rewards being services rather than cash.

Several of the best books about big-time college sports, especially Willie Morris's *The Courting of Marcus Dupree* (Doubleday, 1983), offer astonishing tales of college coaches going into shacks without indoor plumbing or dangerous big city housing projects to court star athletes. Or of high school football games in backwater towns being besieged by scouts, many of them flying in on their own private planes. Throughout New York City, school gyms whose doors have to be protected by armed guards are filled with coaches, recruiters, and representatives of scouting services who come to evaluate local talent. For what other purpose than sports would representatives of the University of Arizona or North Carolina State come to the South Bronx? Certainly not to recruit science majors.

There were times in American history when poor minority communities were valued for their labor power. But in the 1980s, few large employers seek to recruit their labor force in inner city neighborhoods. Sports offers one of the few tracks from poverty to the mainstream. Those involved in organized sports — whether as little league coaches, community center directors, or athletic administrators — thus have an awesome responsibility. The positive values of sports — discipline, teamwork, fairness, endurance in the face of adversity — serve as powerful counterweights to the hustling culture and the welfare cycle. Yet even here, too frequently, representatives of organized sports, especially on the higher levels, have reinforced the cynicism of inner city youngsters. When basketball star Len Bias died of an overdose at the University of Maryland, a first-rate research institution, the coach was kicked upstairs rather than fired, and given a six-figure salary. In the face of such dealings, is it any wonder that young athletes shave points, get people to write papers for them, and take under-the-table payoffs? Their signals are coming from the top.

What is to be done? In the short run, we must recognize that sports do serve as a lifeline for inner city communities. Given the disintegration of so many other institutions, it is counterproductive to tell youngsters not to spend time honing their athletic skills. Instead, we should support educational reforms in sports at all levels: minimum grade requirements for participation on high school teams; minimum standards of admission to universities; harsh penalties for coaches who neglect the education of their athletes. In addition, we should develop new codes of conduct that recognize the employee status of major college athletes. They should have the right to collective bargaining, grievance machinery, guarantees of proper medical care, and workmen's compensation for serious injuries. Such reforms, both educational and legal, would assure that youngsters in the athletic workforce get the maximum return from powerful institutions who benefit from their labor.

But in the long run, we must change national priorities so that sports no longer serve as a primary repository of the hope for upward mobility. It is a sign of profound national pathology that top students pour into Wall Street to become expert at dismantling companies while millions of young people, living amidst vacant lots, abandoned buildings, and broken-down roads and rail lines cannot find jobs. The young people of our inner cities should be recruited not to shoot baskets or catch passes, but to rehabilitate abandoned houses, revive dormant farms and factories, clean up parks and streets, and construct schools, libraries, and ballfields. We should make the same fiscal commitment to rescuing our youth that we do to protecting the national defense. Something must be done to tap their idealism and creativity before they become hopelessly cynical. Asking sports to perform that role is a sign of warped priorities and a political culture in an advanced state of decay.

MARK NAISON

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SCHOOLS FOR WHISTLE BLOWERS

EDUCATING ETHICAL ENGINEERS

CARL MITCHAM

In the American economy, engineers occupy a place somewhere between farmers and venture capitalists. Although a source of our high-tech bread and butter, engineers seldom benefit directly from the big-money investments that take their designs to the people. The need for more U.S. engineers is touted by those concerned with the problems of competitiveness and defense — Japan and the Soviet Union both graduate much higher percentages of engineers than the U.S. — but in real life engineers are often charged with contributing to environmental mismanagement (the Army Corps of Engineers), industrial accidents (Three-Mile Island, Bhopal, Chernobyl), diverse technical failures (DC-10 crashes and the Challenger disaster), the computerization of society (*vide* hacker break-ins and robotic-generated unemployment) and military defense (SDI).

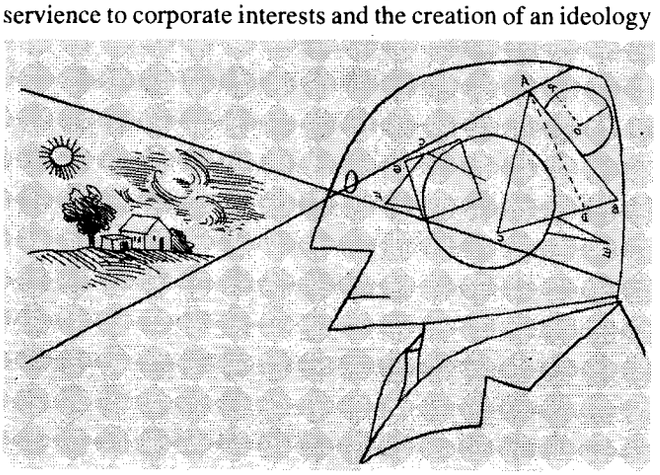
Because of such pressures engineering education is being transformed, not just in its technical aspects by scientific advance, but in professional self-understanding. Changes are taking place in professional definition and ethical expectation that are equally if not more important than those normally thought of as the core of technical education. To appreciate this phenomenon it is necessary to know something about where engineers come from and what they do.

Engineering is a step-child of the professions, a concept — formulated in relation to doctors, lawyers, and ministers during the rise of the universities — that implies advanced education leading to the performance of an important service in society. Professions certify their members and exercise autonomy in their work. But engineers, in comparison with the traditional professions, are not only late-comers, but lack prestige and autonomy.

Engineers (from the Latin *ingeniator*, referring to one who designs and constructs battering rams, catapults, and other engines of war) were originally soldiers. In *Troilus and Cressida*, for instance, Achilles is termed "a rare engineer"; Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) defines "engineer" as "one who directs the artillery of an army." Indeed, the first schools to grant engineering degrees were associated with the military — e.g., the Ecole Polytechnique (founded 1794) and the Military Academy at West Point (1802). The Corps of Engineers remains an important branch of the U.S. Army. In such a context, the primary duty of engineers was to obey orders.

In peacetime, at least as far back as Rome, soldiers have been put to work building roads, bridges, and other communication infrastructures. Yet it was not until the eighteenth century that John Smeaton (1724-1792), architect of the Eddystone Lighthouse and other "public works," first called himself a "civil engineer" — a term which has come to designate one who designs transportation networks, dams, water-supply and sanitation systems, etc. The creation of this civilian counterpart to military engineering initially gave no cause to alter the basic sense of engineering obligation, and the civil engineer remained duty-bound to obey his employer, usually some arm of the government. The later developments of engineering (mechanical, chemical, electrical, etc.) simply transferred the obedience to business corporations.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, however, professional engineering societies were established: the American Society for Civil Engineers (ASCE) in 1852, the American Society for Mechanical Engineers (ASME) in 1880, etc. This movement entailed both the explicit formulation of subservience to corporate interests and the creation of an ideology



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of engineering as the crucial contribution to modern progress — thus setting up a tension which has yet to be fully resolved.

The first codes of engineering ethics define the primary duty of the engineer to be one of service as a "faithful agent or trustee" of some employing company. Unlike physicians and lawyers, who profess a loyalty to certain substantive ideals of health and justice, engineers seem to pursue nothing more than efficiency, efficiency as a means to an end determined by others. Indeed, it is precisely this view of engineering that makes it a "safe" subject in Soviet universities, and is one reason why the USSR produces so many more engineers than the U.S. (Consequently, engineers perform many more lower-level, technical tasks, and middle-level management functions there than in the U.S.)

Developing alongside the code of obedience, and in tension with it, was a bold vision of the engineer as the primary agent of technical change and the main force in human progress. As an analytic thinker free from the biases of special interest groups, the engineer insures that technical change eventuates in human benefit. In 1895, in an ASCE presidential address, George S. Morison spelled out this idea: "We are the priests of material development, of the work

The ethics of science & technology studies

Engineering ethics is only one aspect of a much larger educational agenda that includes a number of specialized ethical concerns. That agenda opens into the broader field of science-technology-society (STS) studies.

Traditional ethics codes (such as the Ten Commandments) stress relationships between the human person and God and among human beings. The development of modern technological powers has, however, promoted recognition of a need to expand ethics to relations between human beings and the non-human world — both natural and artificial. Thus, complementing engineering ethics are environmental ethics, biomedical ethics, nuclear ethics, computer ethics, etc. — which, taken together, point toward a general ethics of technology.

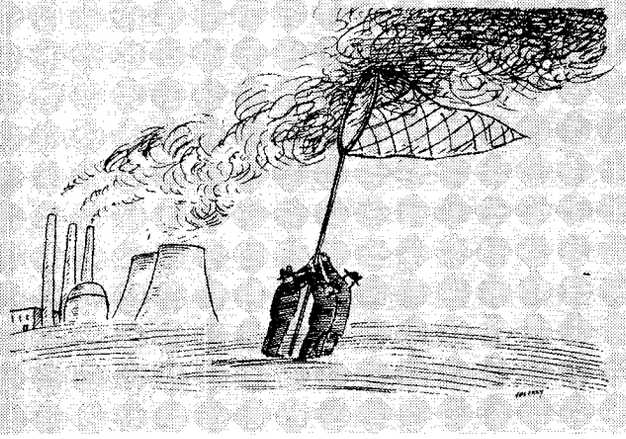
The single most important book in this field is Hans Jonas's *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age* (University of Chicago Press, 1984). A good companion volume will be the forthcoming collection *Technology and Responsibility* (D. Reidel, 1987) edited by Paul Durbin in the "Philosophy and Technology" series of the Society for Philosophy and Technology.

The origins of the broader STS movement can be traced to 1960s reactions to certain excesses of modern science and technology and to the idea that both are somehow "value neutral." The consumer and environmental movements, the energy crisis, ideas of alternative or intermediate technologies, the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1969 and Office of Technology Assessment in 1972, all contributed to an emerging awareness that science and technology are not wholly autonomous or self-contained disciplines. In fact, Steven Goldman, director of the Lehigh University STS program, believes these "social processes," as he aptly calls them, are fully understood only in their social context.

Neither science nor technology is neutral. Both depend on, embody, and influence human perceptions of the good. Technologies, as Langdon Winner has argued in *The Whale and the Reactor* (University of Chicago Press, 1986), are not so much simple tools as "forms of life." In Albert Borgmann's more comprehensive *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life* (University of Chicago Press, 1984), the kinds of tools we use — technical devices which conceal their functioning — are seen as giving rise to thoughtless consumption.

But if one side of the STS movement entails criticism, another aims to promote technology. With concern for a critical appraisal of modern technological ways of being in the world has come a desire to make sure everyone is truly knowledgeable about what he or she is criticizing. Engineers particularly have been creating courses on how engineers think and defending technology as a liberating, humanistic enterprise. Samuel Florman's *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering* (St. Martin's Press, 1976) and Henry Petroski's *To Engineer Is Human* (St. Martin's Press, 1985) reflect this aspect of STS studies.

Although recent concern about "technological literacy" has emphasized the second approach, it has not done so without some appreciation of the social choices inherent in different technologies. Scientist Rustum Roy (director of the Materials Research Lab at Pennsylvania State



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which enables other men to enjoy the fruits of the great sources of power in Nature, and of the power of mind over matter. We are the priests of the new epoch, without superstitions."

At its height between the wars, this vision of expanded engineering activity contributed to the election of Herbert Hoover, the first engineer president — Jimmy Carter was the second. The same vision spawned the technocracy movement, the idea that engineers should be given political and economic power. Thorsten Veblen's *The Engineers and the Price System* (1921), for instance, argued that if engineers could be freed from subservience to business interests, their own standards of good and bad, right and wrong would lead to the creation of a more sound economy and better consumer products.

World War II, which mobilized science and engineering for national purposes, and the postwar social recovery contributed to a temporary suppression of this tension. Later, the consumer and environmental movements of the 1960s and 1970s brought it back to the fore and provoked some engineers to challenge corporate direction. The seeds of this revived tension were planted in 1947 when the Engineers' Council for Professional Development (ECPD) drew up the first engineering ethics code for various branches of engineering and affirmed an engineering responsibility not just to an employer but to the "public welfare." Later revisions of the code were even stronger: "Engineers shall hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public . . . ."

The problem for engineers, however, has been how to develop the professional autonomy that would enable them to practice this commitment. Unlike doctors and lawyers, engineers are seldom self-employed; they are dependent for remuneration on already established social organizations — agencies of the state or private corporations. Individual engineers find it difficult to offset this organizational disadvantage and express their own professional interest or moral standards.

A conjunction of events in 1972 contributed to the germination of a new professional self-understanding which began to address this weakness. The three-year-old Environmental Protection Agency banned DDT; Congress set up the Office of Technology Assessment and a program at the National Science Foundation to fund research on ethics and values in science and technology. But the most important single event was what has become known as "the BART case."

In the late 1950s, metropolitan San Francisco decided to create the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system. BART was to be the most advanced rapid transit in the world, eliminating both motormen and conductors, operated and monitored by an automated train control (ATC) system. Construction began in 1963 and at the end of 1971, almost three years behind schedule and considerably over budget, was nearing the first stage of completion.

By this time, however, three engineers — Holger Hjortsvang, Max Blankenzee, and Robert Bruder (their names deserve to be remembered) — had all independently become seriously concerned about the adequacy of ATC, as well as the installation and management procedures of the general contractors, Parson, Brinkerhoff, Tudor, and Bechtel (PBTB). For nearly a year, the three engineers had expressed their concerns to PBTB both orally and in writing, only to have them consistently set aside.

So the engineers contacted a member of the BART oversight board and conveyed to him a number of papers documenting their case. These papers were then distributed to the full board and to BART management. The press became aware of the controversy, and late in February 1972 there was a public

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University) and engineer George Bugliarello (president of Polytechnic University in New York) — the leaders of the recent second national STS conference on technological literacy held in Washington, D.C. in February — both bemoaned the lack of public debate about President Reagan's State of the Union proposal to spend $6 billion on the superconducting super collider. Were there not other projects, even in science, that deserved higher priorities?

What was also important about the recent conference, however, was not just that it brought together the critical and promotional sides of the STS movement, but that it did so up and down the educational hierarchy and with explicit recognition of the importance of an STS-religion relationship. Educators are increasingly eager to teach science and technology as social processes, even in grades K-12, and as social processes which are properly influenced by and sometimes influence religion.

Fundamentalists who criticize "secular humanism" or advocate equal time for "creation science" are not as off the wall as the secular press makes out. In fact, across the political spectrum many quite mainstream educators now recognize that science and technology must ultimately be appraised in ethical terms. Carter Democrats argue for morally fair and environmentally safe technologies. Reagan Republicans focus on the equally ethical issues of an adequate military defense and a science that can serve economic competitiveness. Both implicitly accept science and technology as social processes that shape and are shaped by our personal and public ideals. Some of these ideals are religious or spiritual in character and should be discussed as such.

For regular access to curriculum developments in the STS field, one should consult the *Bulletin of Science, Technology, and Society* published by the Penn State STS program and the *Science, Technology, & Society Newsletter* from Lehigh University. Two more scholarly journals are *Science, Technology, and Human Values* from the STS program at MIT, and *Technology in Society* from Polytechnic University. *Technology and Society* magazine, published by the IEEE, is the engineers' contribution to the field. C.M.

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hearing. Curiously, the result was a vote of confidence in BART management. On March 3, Hjortsvang, Blankenzee, and Bruder were fired.

The engineers appealed for support to the California Society of Professional Engineers (CSPE), arguing that they were only attempting to live up to the ethics code obligation to hold "the public welfare as paramount" and to "notify the proper authorities of any observed conditions which endanger public safety and health." On June 19, a CSPE inquiry was submitted to the California Senate largely supporting the engineers. Then, in dramatic confirmation of their concerns, on October 2, 1972, a BART train overran a station because of ATC failure and injured a number of passengers. The BART system was temporarily shut down.

Prior to the BART case, the only ways in which professional engineering societies had acted to enforce their ethics code had been to discipline engineers — usually by expelling them from the professional society for being disloyal to a company or employer. This was the first time a professional engineering society had backed its members by criticizing a specific corporation. A further report by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), the largest engineering society in the world, led to the creation of an Award for Outstanding Service in the Public Interest, first given in 1978 to Hjortsvang, Blankenzee, and Bruder.

Last year the need for more engineering independence was highlighted by the disaster of the space shuttle Challenger. Two engineers,— Allan McDonald and Roger Boisjoly — had raised questions about the O-ring seals on the rocket booster at least a year before the accident. And on January 26, 1986, both explicitly opposed the launch scheduled for the next day. As a result of their testimony before the presidential commission conducting its investigation, McDonald and Boisjoly were demoted by their employer, Morton Thiokol. Pressure by the presidential commission, however, got McDonald restored to his former position, and it is noteworthy that he has become the person in charge of the design modifications and Thiokol's representative to the press. Although so far an isolated case — the situation with Boisjoly has not been so favorably resolved — this certainly points toward a new alignment of forces in the engineering world.

Perhaps no single engineer has done more to promote this new alignment than Stephen H. Unger, an electrical engineer at Columbia University. It was Unger, for instance, who did the report on the BART case for the IEEE and who was behind the creation of the public service award. In his book, *Controlling Technology: Ethics and the Responsible Engineer* (1982), Unger proposes a number of different ways that professional engineering societies can and should support the ethical practice of engineering — especially "blowing the whistle" on actions and operations which do not live up to high standards of safety.

The strongest way to institute such support, Unger argues, would be to follow the practices used successfully by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) to defend the autonomy of university teachers. When engineers are punished for properly exercising their professional responsibilities, engineering societies — like the AAUP — should undertake an investigation, a publication of the findings, and (if necessary) a censure of the company involved. Engineers should also insist on internal company procedures for dealing

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Ethical Problems in Engineering, by Albert Flores and Robert J. Baum, eds. 2nd edition. 2 vols. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1980. Vol. 1, *Readings*, reprints sixty articles. Vol. 2, *Cases*, contains forty-nine case studies.

Ethics in Engineering, by Mike W. Martin and Roland Schinzinger, McGraw-Hill, 1983. This analytically oriented textbook by a philosopher (Martin) and engineer (Schinzinger) grew out of EVIST-sponsored research.

Responsible Technology: A Christian Perspective, by Stephen V. Monsma, et al., Eerdmans, 1986. The first book in English to relate engineering ethics to Christian principles.

Engineering Professionalism and Ethics, by James H. Schaub and Karl Pavlovic, eds., John Wiley, 1983. Reprints seventy-one articles. A resource text similar to Flores and Baum.

Controlling Technology: Ethics and the Responsible Engineer by Stephen H. Unger, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982.

"The Truesteel Affair" is a video cassette dramatizing the conflict between professional standards and business pressures. Made by the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario, Canada, it is available through the Information Center, National Society of Professional Engineers, Washington, D.C.

The Center for Study of Ethics in the Professions at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago has also prepared a series of teaching modules on *The Moral Status of Loyalty* (by Marcia Baron), *Professional Responsibility for Harmful Actions* (by Martin Curd and Larry May), *A Critical Examination of Risk-Benefit Analysis in Decisions Concerning Public Safety and Health* (by Mark Sagoff), *Technology Assessment: A Historical Approach* (by Rondo Comeron and A.J. Millard). C.M.

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adequately with professional disagreements. And they should honor those who have lived up to the highest ethical ideals at great professional cost.

Last May, Unger presented the third Award for Outstanding Service in the Public Interest to engineer Richard Parks. Parks had criticized as unsafe a number of clean-up procedures after the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, and was subsequently demoted and fired. But, according to the award citation, "His courageous adherence to the highest standards of professional ethics deserves the respect and admiration of the engineering profession." Indeed, in Parks's own words upon acceptance of the award: "Recent events involving the Challenger shuttle remind the world that integrity and dedication to professionalism have to be a central concept in the decision-making process. . . ."

The public service award is, of course, a kind of education both of the public and of engineers, but the new engineering ethics also requires that these ideals become part of the classroom experience of student engineers. During the last decade a number of engineering schools have instituted courses that begin to address this need. Recently the organization that certifies engineering school programs has begun to ask schools to identify exactly what they are doing in the way of engineering-related ethics. Stanford University, for instance, in the 1970s created an interdisciplinary program in Values, Technology, Science, and Society under the direction of an aeronautical engineer, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute began to require a senior design project emphasizing societal relationships. At Georgia Institute of Technology and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, special courses stress science and technology policy. Other schools, such as Cooper Union and Polytechnic University, offer courses explicitly devoted to the ethics of technology.

So far these have remained voluntary projects — and not, it should be noted, projects for which engineering schools in Catholic universities are taking any real initiative. In a recent conversation, a former dean of engineering at the Catholic University of America argued that the general moral climate precluded the need for a special emphasis on ethics in engineering. But when asked whether it was possible to cite some cases of graduates who had demonstrated the effectiveness of this moral climate by becoming involved in special kinds of engineering or becoming whistle blowers, neither the CUA nor the Notre Dame engineering schools could come up with any examples.

There is ferment in the engineering educational establishment, however, and in the future some kind of ethics course may become a requirement for engineering degrees. Associated with changes in professional self-understanding by engineers, surely this is at least as important a change in engineering education as those regularly demanded by technical advances within science and technology.

Strategies Enabling the Laity for Ministry

Integrating Personal and Professional Life

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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WHERE:	**The Clark Kerr Campus, University of California, Berkeley, California**
WHEN:	**June 2-5, 1987**
THEME:	**Strategies Enabling the Laity for Ministry: Integrating Personal and Professional Life**

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The Eleventh Annual Conference of the National Association for Lay Ministry will explore the challenge of integrating our personal and professional lives. Conference speakers will include Joseph Chinnici, O.F.M. ("Remembering: The Context for American Catholic Laity"), Rosemary Ruether ("Visioning: Challenges, Tensions, and Models of Ministry") and Tad Guzie ("Celebrating: Enabled Laity — Called to Ministry, Called to Celebration").

The conference fee will range from $125 to $150; accommodations at Clark Kerr Campus will cost approximately $150, including meals. The Clark Kerr Campus is an exceptionally comfortable facility located in the heart of the San Francisco Bay Area.

If you are interested in receiving a brochure, please write to: NALM Conference, 521 Boden Way, Oakland, CA 94610.

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SEX EDUCATION: A MATTER OF BODY & SOUL

CURRICULUM, COMMUNITY, & CONSENSUS

KAREN SUE SMITH

Last October, foes of sex education lost an eloquent spokesman. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop fanned an already inflamed national controversy about sex education in public schools. Koop suggested not only that sex education is essential, but that, in light of the AIDS crisis, explicit information about heterosexual and homosexual behavior should be included in school curricula.

What should be included in the curriculum? Who should decide? What is the role of parents, health care professionals, and religious leaders? How will these decisions be made, given our pluralistic society? These are some of the questions that have ignited the sex education debate around the nation. And while it may not be a typical example, New York City — with its ethnic and religious diversity, reputation for the cultural avant garde, and sheer size — makes an instructive case study.

The same month Koop made his speech, all seven members of the New York City Board of Education voted to require every public school to implement a sex education program, using as a base the revised curriculum, "Family Living Including Sex Education." The Board's mandate gave foes of the city curriculum a rallying cry. Opponents mounted a campaign to have the curriculum withdrawn and still further revised even though:

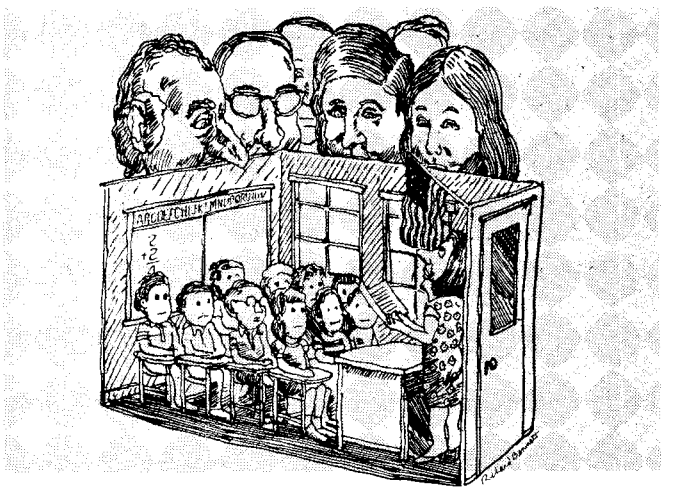
- the curriculum, in earlier editions, has been in place since 1967;
- the revised third edition has been reviewed by an advisory committee composed of community leaders including clergy;
- the curriculum has been piloted in four elementary districts (two heavily Roman Catholic) and several high schools over a four-year period without major, irreconcilable objections;
- the program has been voluntarily implemented by twenty-one out of thirty-two city elementary districts and all high schools;
- the curriculum may be adapted by local districts, modifications subject to the approval of the chancellor;
- the directives insist that an advisory committee for each school and district review the program annually;
- any parent may request, by signing a waiver, that his or her child be withdrawn from the course.

Naturally, the city looks upon the activities of its critics as an effort to reopen a closed case. This September, the curriculum is scheduled to be in place.

The most organized and vocal opponents of the plan include the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, the Diocese of Brooklyn, and an ad hoc group, the Coalition of Concerned Clergy, who wrote an open letter to the Board last December. The letter was signed by diocesan officials plus several vicars, one rabbi, a few Orthodox priests, and a score of evangelical clergy. Curiously, not one mainline Protestant was among the signatories, unless one were to stretch the term to include Richard Neuhaus, who was a signer. Nor was the coalition, East Brooklyn Churches, listed, a well organized group of activists known for bending the ear of City Hall until hundreds of housing units had been erected in their community.

Publicly, the archdiocese makes clear that it is not opposed to sex education per se. (As early as 1965 the Vatican document, "Declaration on Christian Education," admonished teachers that as children "grow older they should receive positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex.") Rather, it is this particular curriculum which dioceses reject. The overarching objection is one applicable to programs around the country (and is not limited to sex education): the value-free pretensions of the curriculum.

In an op ed piece for *Newsday* (January 8, 1987) Msgr. John G. Woolsey wrote: 'The curriculum is devoid of moral values



KAREN SUE SMITH *is an assistant editor of* Commonweal.

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and premises. It conveys information about sexuality in a mechanical fashion and a purely secular vocabulary." Woolsey cites "sexual abstinence, chastity, modesty, and marital fidelity" as terms noticeably absent from the city's course.

A lack of values, critics say, lies at the heart of the curriculum's hesitancy to say when sexual activity is appropriate and when it is not; which family pattern should be presented as the ideal; whether or not homosexuality is just one mode of sexual expression among others; which contraceptive methods are preferable, and so on.

Mr. Robert Terte, Director of Public Affairs for the Board explains that a "moral vacuum is not the intention of the program. Children already come to the school with values. We are not taking away anything. . . . The school can't say, 'You're a bastard'; 'you come from an illegitimate family.' That overlooks the reality that many parents become parents at age fourteen or fifteen. It's frightening, children as parents. No, we're not in a position to identify what the ideal family is."

Reality and ideals. It is the relation between them that forms the core of the dispute over values in education generally, and sex education in particular.

On the one hand, it is the staggering realities of a generation of social upheaval and rapid change — affecting sexual activity (with all its ramifications), marriage, family structures, and social tolerances — which public school teachers face daily. Regardless of what people say their values are, the facts are grim.

An article by Gary L. Bauer in the *Washington Post* (January 5, 1987) listed these statistics:

- 14 percent of children who began school in September, 1986 have unmarried parents;
- 40 percent will live in a broken home before they reach their eighteenth birthday;
- between one-quarter and one-third are latchkey children.
- Births out of wedlock, as a percentage of all births, increased more than 450 percent in just thirty years.
- Child and spouse abuse has climbed to its highest level since accurate polling began measuring it.

Add to this a divorce rate at around 50 percent; a poverty rate among single mothers and their children — the economic factor inextricably intertwined with teen pregnancy — that is growing faster than that of any other group. Finally, there is the high rate among teens of sexually transmitted diseases, the life and death specter of AIDS, and a rising rate of teen suicide.

These realities raise a host of questions for educators: If low self-esteem is a major contributor to premature sexual activity, pregnancy, and anti-social behavior among youth, can the school foster a healthy self-image among its students by holding up expectations for family life that half its students' families fail to exemplify? Will emphasizing the stable, two-parent model of family (an emphasis critics want) help students cope with parental divorce and other painful family changes they are facing? The argument is that such an ideal serves to undervalue the accomplishments of a happy "reconstituted" family — husband, wife, and children from a previous marriage — or the sacrifices of the mother who has successfully raised her family alone.

On the other hand, the society does espouse values; marriage for example, but not divorce. And advocates of values in sex education are arguing, in light of these same statistics and with the schools' questions in mind, that we had better hang onto and strengthen what societal consensus there is concerning our most basic values before the damages grow even worse. To do so, schools have a role to play as supports for parental and community values, a role that deserves more than lip service from school administrators.

Mr. Frank Macchiarola, an active Catholic who was the school board's chancellor during the beginning of the recent revision process, and who is an opponent of the proposed sex education curriculum, says: "To say there's no place for values is ridiculous. . . . We operate all the time with a set of values. . . . The value agreement [between the public school and the public] needs to be enlarged, not diminished. . . . I don't believe you can say that the right to life is to be dismissed as religious; this is our value, the most credible thing we have."

Macchiarola's statement echoes the New York State Catholic Conference's 1986 guidelines, "Education on Human Sexuality: A Catholic Reflection":

> Each diocese and parish must also be concerned with programs of education in sexuality found in public schools. Although sound and commendable public school programs exist, others, while purporting to be value-free, are laden with values contrary to those which we hold to be most sacred.

The two values that critics of the curriculum seem to mention most consistently are: that the traditional two-parent, stable family structure be presented as the achievable ideal, not one option among others, and that sexual activity outside of marriage be taught clearly as wrong. Indeed, critics have charged that the curriculum is not merely morally vacuous, but that sexual activity by children and teens is treated as "acceptable" behavior; it may even be encouraged by the program. A position paper drawn up by the Office of Catholic Education, Diocese of Brooklyn, describes what it calls "the philosophical underpinning of the curriculum":

> Boys and girls, beginning around the fifth grade become sexually active and continue to be so with a variety of partners both homosexual and heterosexual throughout the rest of their lives. This behavior is acceptable as long as no one becomes pregnant or contracts a sexually transmitted disease. Girls should know that should they become pregnant, abortion is an alternative which they may choose without the knowledge or consent of their parents.

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A reading of the pilot edition of the curriculum shows that critics do have a point: the curriculum manages, for the most part, to avoid making moral pronouncements — saying what is right or wrong — even on issues for which it reserves its strongest language. A convincing case can be made, and ought to be made, that the language used is too weak in its attempts to present the disadvantages of sexual activity by children and teens — especially given the amount of time and space allotted to contraception, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases. Several of the concrete recommendations along these lines by the diocese would significantly improve the curriculum; most notably, an insertion at strategic places in the text of the question: Why is it important not to engage in sexual intercourse as a young teen?

Having said this, it is only fair to add that the diocesan statement above is an overstatement, a serious misrepresentation of the spirit and letter of the curriculum. The schools simply have to recognize the fact that some children (hundreds of thousands of them each year) are or will become sexually active in their preteens and teens, and they must teach students about contraception, prenatal care, and disease. But such a recognition and response does not, in itself, constitute a philosophy that sexual activity is "acceptable."

Furthermore, consider that the curriculum includes lessons called "saying no" for students in fifth grade through high school. While these lessons might be made stronger and clearer, they do encourage "abstinence" of a sort — not giving in to peer pressure to engage in sexual activity — even on occasions when they do not mention the term directly.

In the lesson for fifth and sixth grades, for example, teachers are instructed to emphasize that "when people really care about you, they will respect your right to say no."

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COMMONWEAL

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Teachers at the junior high level are cautioned against making "censorious statements which will decrease students' feelings of self-worth," and condemning parental actions "which may differ from traditional codes." Yet the teacher is asked to help students examine the *problems and dangers* of adolescent sexual intimacy, and to "highlight the positive values of love, commitment, and marriage." For reasons of emotional immaturity, not pregnancy or disease, the curriculum says, sexual intimacy among young people is referred to as "unwise" and "dangerous." (The same note of danger is sounded in the New York bishops' statement in its suggestion that the government sponsor a media campaign "to alert teenagers to the dangers of pre-marital sex.") Students are asked to role-play, write about, and discuss how they would "say no" under pressure; how to decide which behavior is best when peer values conflict with parental values; and to think ahead about how decisions they make now will affect the future. It should be evident from these examples that the thrust of the entire curriculum is on decision-making rather than on prohibiting certain behavior.

Words like "unwise" and "dangerous" are among the strongest terms employed anywhere in the curriculum. They are as strong as the terms "unkind and dangerous" which are used to discourage the stereotyping of individuals (homosexuals) by appearance or profession. Here, negative stereotyping clearly represents behavior the course is seeking to curb. The only stronger terms were the words "racist" and "sexist" used disparagingly in order to promote the values of racial and sexual equality.

At the high school level, students are asked to apply their decision-making skills to such cases as:

> A girl of sixteen and a boy of seventeen have just started dating and he's urging her to have intercourse with him. She's a virgin and very reluctant. He keeps pressuring her, saying that he'll find someone else if she keeps refusing.

Among the discussion topics for this scenario is the "right to say no." In the following awkwardly worded paragraph, the intent is clearly to support abstinence:

> Young people are often made to feel that they must have sex. Some who abstain from sexual activity may feel insecure, immature, or worried. Why? What are some reasons this might happen? How can we prevent it? How do you feel about the right to say no? Are there different pressures for the male and female?

In sum, my point is that, despite the failure to say clearly that young people should not engage in sexual intercourse, this curriculum treats sexual activity by youth in the same way that it treats other behaviors it is designed to discourage. This may be judged inadequate or weak, but to call it "acceptance" is not merely imprecise, it is unjustly inflammatory. Such a charge might readily get people's attention, or their attendance at a meeting, but it does so at the expense of misleading them. It risks eroding the church's credibility and the kind of trust that is crucial if consensus is ever to be reached on this issue. Finally, it is worth underlining that the credibility of the

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Brooklyn Diocese's written critique is enhanced considerably, not lessened, by the several comments that this or that section "is excellent." Such balance in an otherwise negative assessment serves to engender trust.

According to Frank Macchiarola, it was precisely a breach of trust created through a series of political acts by the school administration that originally corrupted the process of testing the sex education curriculum. Health clinics in several schools were set up which dispensed contraceptives with parental consent-slips too difficult for many parents to comprehend. The Harvey Milk high school was established for homosexual students with no significant public discussion or debate about the reasons or effects. And all of these actions were taken without the prior consent of the central Board.

To examine all of these objections, while pertinent and important, is beyond the scope of this article. The least controversial curriculum imaginable could be derailed by such events. They illustrate well the need for candor and consensus.

"You have to require honesty with parents about what children are going to be taught," Macchiarola says. "Is sex education in New York City public schools dealt with in an honest and appropriate way? No. It could have been done correctly if we had realized the importance of values and trust. I tried to get parents involved, but the school system is defensive; *in loco parentis sine parentibus,* not *cum parentibus* is what they want."

Dr. Ralph Brande retired in 1984 after serving as superintendent of Brooklyn's District 22, one of the heavily Roman Catholic elementary districts selected to pilot the revised sex education program, beginning in 1981. Brande, an active Catholic, father, and former teacher, chose several schools, principals he could trust, teachers amenable to training, and parent leaders — even allowing local school board members to sit in on monthly curriculum review meetings if they wished. Together they noted their objections: primarily, that the traditional family deserved precedence over other family structures, and that homosexuality should not be tacitly approved. Once these objections had been met by modifications in the district's version of the curriculum, Brande never received a single objection from any parent or anyone else. After his retirement, however, Brande says, "The roof fell in."

Apparently what happened was that fallout — over the city's school-based health clinics and the Harvey Milk school — caused the trust that Brande had so carefully built between the community and the schools to cave in.

At this juncture, Brande advises: "There ought to be meetings at the highest levels, where in a calm and dispassionate way people can highlight areas of agreement and disagreement. . . . There has to be dialogue and focus. . . . Then, build on areas of agreement rather than antagonizing each other."

It is unfortunate that an archdiocesan spokesman, Bishop

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Edward M. Egan, testifying at a City Council hearing last month, failed to use the opportunity for "calm and dispassionate" dialogue. Referring to the proposed sex education curriculum, Egan said: "The new rule is promiscuity is acceptable no matter what your age as long as you use drugs and devices to avoid pregnancy and as long as you are willing to kill what is in the mother. . . . It's a new religion."

Currently, diocesan campaigns are being waged to assure that parents and clergy are informed of the issues and to encourage them and other parishioners to volunteer to serve on school district and local school advisory committees. Packets of materials are being distributed to pastors and administrators. They contain detailed lists of problem areas within the curriculum; a position paper applying church teaching to the proposed curriculum; a copy of the health clinic parental consent form; and an annotated dissection of typical Board arguments used on behalf of the sex ed program in meetings with parents.

Whether the Board will be willing to make major changes at this point in time remains to be seen, but the basic debate on values may continue with each yearly review.

While it looks like a battle, the process itself could be valuable. If parents respond positively, and if appeals to them are neither alarmist nor distorted, discussion could remind parents that the sexual education of their children is primarily their own responsibility. If parents are ill-equipped for the job, the church and school can help them. Furthermore, the expectation within the curriculum — that students already arrive at school with values planted and cultivated by home, church, and synagogue — should challenge Catholic parents, clergy, and educators to make sure this assumption is valid.

Consensus will require not only honesty and dialogue, but a willingness to give and take. Maybe it will mean including more lessons and stronger language about postponing sex for children and teens. This is a value that could be agreed upon by a diverse constituency for a variety of psychological, physiological, social, and moral reasons which involve no religious imposition of any kind. But to reject a public school curriculum until it teaches that sex should be postponed until marriage — that is, to expect it to teach the value of life-long chastity and sexual intercourse only within marriage (as the church teaches but the society at large does not espouse or practice) — is to prevent a consensus on the curriculum as a whole. The costs of such an impasse should be carefully weighed. If consensus can be reached on strongly discouraging students' sexual activity, it would be worth a tradeoff of some lesser objection Catholic critics and others might have.

Those who criticize the curriculum for its "morality by consensus" approach to issues are correct about one thing: morality itself is not determined by consensus. But the values which are to be included in a public school curriculum certainly are.

THE CASE OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

SUCCESS & CATHOLIC INNER-CITY SCHOOLS

DAVID E. DeCOSSE

Perhaps the most important thing about Our Lady of Sorrows School on the Lower East Side of Manhattan is the building; the building has survived. It was built in 1874 by the German-Swiss founders of this Capuchin parish. At the turn of the century Italian immigrant children began filling its classrooms. Then, in the late 1940s, Puerto Ricans began coming to the area near Pitt and Stanton Streets. They were joined in the sixties by Dominicans. Now the four-story, rusty brick building, lined by an old black iron gate and whitewashed by roosting pigeons, educates 358 children. They are almost all Hispanic; 90 percent are on some kind of public assistance; some fifty attend the neighborhood storefront Pentecostal churches. The surrounding streets swim in crack and cocaine. The 1980 Census lists 28.7 percent below the poverty level. More than 30 percent live in public housing, far above the New York City average. Fierce pressure mounts to develop luxury apartments out of old, fire-escape-ringed tenements. This is a neighborhood of fear and flux and very tight budgets. And yet the building, with "School of Christian Doctrine" hewn out above the door, has survived, a steadfast sign of commitment to the community.

Yet perhaps even more important than the enduring building is the elementary school's principal, Brother John Shento, O.F.M. Cap., and his band of teachers. If the building has stood as a sign to the community, these people have brought

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life to that sign. With shoulder-length brown hair and a mustache, Brother John sits deep in a soft chair in the teachers' lounge before school starts, his legs, beneath his brown Franciscan robe and white cincture, stretching onto a footrest in a posture of gathering strength. From such comfort he jokes with the other teachers, puffs Tareyton 100's, and sips herbal tea. But at 8:30 he's off, clanging a hand-held golden bell down the stairs beneath the cross of San Damiano, through the tiny courtyard where five or six kids are playing a game of tag called "Johney," and into the buzzing cafeteria, a swirl of faces and knapsacks. School begins. The children file out quietly, kidding him as he turns their caps around or pokes them lightly in the side. The mutual affection is obvious.

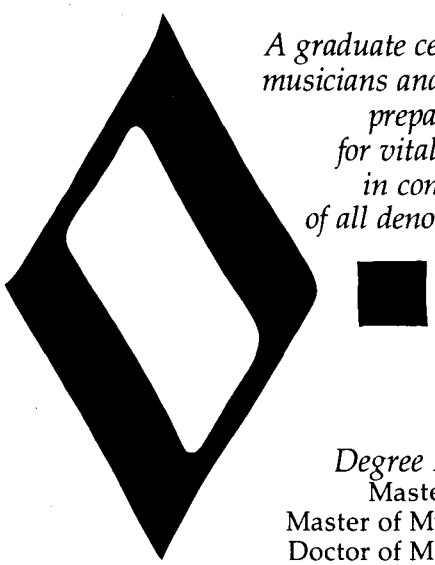
Whatever is most important to Our Lady of Sorrows, these two qualities—of stability and community—are being pointed to as keys behind the increasingly recognized success of poor and minority children in Catholic schools. Indeed, this seems a signal moment for such schools. The American bishops allude to parochial schools' importance in their pastoral letter on the economy. Secretary of Education William Bennett has also trumpeted their cause.

Bishop Emerson Moore of Manhattan, who as pastor of St. Charles Borromeo presides over the highly successful parish school in Harlem which the pope visited in 1979, commented: "The church and the school stand as a symbol of hope for a lot of people. We've been here for a long time and we hope to remain here." He echoed his brother black bishops, who in their 1984 pastoral, "What We Have Seen and Heard," stated: "We cannot overemphasize the tremendous importance of parochial schools for the black community." Perhaps the sting of ongoing urban poverty over the efficacy of some programs has united liberals and conservatives in the church behind the schools as outposts of faith, human dignity, and the battle against poverty.

Studies have borne out the schools' effectiveness, particularly for poor, black, and Hispanic students. Much of this work has been done by Professor James S. Coleman and one of his graduate students, Thomas Hoffer, and by Father Andrew Greeley. Indeed, Professor Coleman's most recent study (*Public and Private High Schools*, Basic Books, 1987; see review, page 216) is certain to stir sharp debate as his 1982 study did.

At least Brother James Kearney, F.M.S., Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of New York, expects so: "It's going to hit the presses and of course you're going to have the public schools out in force and saying it's ridiculous." In 1982, critics of Professor Coleman said his study on high schools was not adjusted for a "selectivity bias." The critics claimed Catholic school students were from more affluent backgrounds, backgrounds which valued education more highly. The new study has been adjusted to meet that criticism. Again, among its results, it points to great benefits for poor, black, and Hispanic students, as well as for students from "deficient" families of one parent, or where both parents work, or where there is little discussion. Perhaps an effect of the study's release will be a more emphatic call for what Brother Kearney termed parental "tax reliefs, tax credits, tax deductions."

But that Catholic schools are highly valued by minorities



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and successful at educating them is one development partly obscuring another—that these schools in urban areas even serve such a population, not a well-heeled elite. The change has been recent. From 1970 to 1984, throughout the country, minority enrollment increased from 9.5 percent to 20.2 percent, while overall enrollment declined by 26 percent, from 4.7 million to 3 million students. In the ten largest urban archdioceses, minority enrollment is at least 30 percent, with blacks predominating in such cities as Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Detroit, and Hispanics in New York and Los Angeles. In Manhattan, home to Our Lady of Sorrows, Catholic elementary schools are 50 percent Hispanic, 22 percent black, 16 percent white, and 11 percent Asian. Twenty percent of the students are non-Catholic, largely Protestants, in Harlem. They are required to take Catholic religion classes.

The schools' selectivity seems to vary. Brother John said his school catered "to the elite of this area," and was too financially strapped to take on children in need of special education, or who only speak Spanish, or who have serious emotional problems. Another criterion is academics. He will take anyone in pre-kindergarten (an increasingly common feature of Catholic schools to help working parents) or kindergarten, but then tests knowledge of such things as the alphabet or colors before first grade. To handle the usual rush of students applying for the seventh grade to evade the local junior high, Brother John tests on questions from a sixth grade reader and asks for facility in subtraction, addition, multiplication, and division. "Maybe three" out of twenty-five who might apply are accepted; sometimes they are asked to repeat a grade. Parents, Brother John said, usually are glad to say okay.

But even as valued as many parochial schools are, they keep closing, burdened by finances and declining enrollment. The National Catholic Education Association reported ninety-seven school closings in 1986-87, a whopping and unexpected increase over a recent low of thirteen in 1983-84. This year as well twenty-one schools have opened, mostly scattered in the western states.

The New York Archdiocese, which includes Staten Island, Manhattan, the Bronx, and northern counties stretching almost to Albany, faces a host of problems in its inner-city schools, as in all of its schools. Costs are up, pushed mostly by lay teachers' salaries which everyone —teachers, principals, and superintendents— seems to agree aren't high enough in the first place but are all the system can bear. A first-year teacher in the archdiocese starts at $14,600, while a first-year teacher for the New York City Board of Education begins at $18,500.

Old school buildings with old wiring and pipes and roofs and windows require what Brother Mike Deegan, C.F.C., principal of St. Francis Xavier Grade School, called a continual "apostolate of the patchwork: You do some windows today, you do some windows tomorrow, hoping to stave off huge outlays."

Then there are phones, heating, and supplies. Oil at Our Lady of Sorrows last year cost $1,200 a month, although this year, with prices down, it has fallen to $630. Phone costs over the last years have bounced from $40 and $50 monthly to $130. Ten cases of paper, which last two months, go for $400.

Insurance has shot up. At Francis Xavier the same comprehensive liability policy that cost $3,800 in 1985-86 now runs $17,000, and even that figure was negotiated down from almost $30,000.

Add to this a declining enrollment caused by a declining school-age population, higher tuition, and the thickening walls between state help for parochial schools, and you have the need for all kinds of cost-cutting and financial creativity. Because the system is decentralized, this burden falls first on the schools, which in a sense are like strapped businesses dependent entirely on their tuition-paying customers. To scrimp a dollar, teachers might pitch in to unclog toilets or grades might consolidate (to the great dismay of parents). Everything gets sold—cakes, raffle chances, T-shirts, tickets to Halloween dances. Chocolate Santas were a strong product for Our Lady of Sorrows last year, pulling in $3,000 of the $55,000 the school raised on its own; chocolate bunnies may have hit a saturated market at Easter, earning only $1,800.

But the primary source of income is tuition. At Our Lady of Sorrows, for a parishioner with one child in the school, the cost is $800 annually; one or two other children in the school would only cost $100 annually for each. Non-parishioners pay a first-child tuition of $900, again with $100 for each added child afterward. (Average tuition at Catholic high schools in New York City is $1,400 a year.) Despite 90 percent of the children at Our Lady of Sorrows being on some kind of public

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assistance, only three families cannot afford to pay and their costs are covered by a Capuchin fund. Often money for school comes from a grandfather or uncle, or a parent on welfare works, or families go without insurance or phones or have two parents working. Of those who can't afford to pay, Brother John said, "I'm sure there are a lot of other people [like them] out there."

But even these fundraising and cost-cutting efforts at many schools would never cover expenses. Brother John explained: "Around April of every year you run out of money and have to go for a command performance, the pastor and the principal." Where they go is before an archdiocesan board which administers the Inter-Parish Finance Commission, a creation, along with the Inner-City Scholarship Fund, of the late Cardinal Terence Cooke.

The IPFC, which taxes parishes on a prorated scale, makes grants to parishes in financial straits. The Scholarship Fund, which raised $3 million this year from foundations, corporations, and gala benefits, grants money specifically to seventy-nine schools in hard times, largely making up the difference between tuition and actual costs, which at Francis Xavier for instance, runs respectively for one child of a parishioner at $700 and $1,300.

The two archdiocesan-wide safety nets are typical of other measures recently established or being undertaken around the country. In Baltimore, for instance, the Lawrence Cardinal Shehan Scholarship Fund provided more than $500,000 of assistance in 1984-85. In Philadelphia, a major effort is well along to raise money to establish a permanent fund by soliciting businesses who have or could benefit from hiring Catholic school graduates. Brother Kearney said New York was considering a similar plan with the aim of making a place for anyone, even if tuition was out of their reach. Last year Brother John's command performance garnered an $80,000, no-strings-attached grant from IPFC. Without that help and the Scholarship Fund, he said, "this school wouldn't exist."

But the flip side of funds like IPFC is perhaps that they discourage penny-pinching and needlessly keep some schools open. Indeed, within six blocks of Francis Xavier, where the enrollment has fallen by 100 over nine years, there are three other Catholic elementary schools. The last school closed in Manhattan, Most Holy Redeemer in the summer of 1985, was one of seven schools in a fourteen-block area. Eighty percent of its students were absorbed by nearby St. Bridget's. The principal at the time of the closing, Father Jack Donahue, C.S.C., who now teaches at Our Lady of Sorrows, spoke of the pain of shutting the doors, but said: "The closing of one, even of two, would have been reasonable. I think it would be reasonable to close another one."

If archdiocesan officials don't exactly covet the Board of Education's money, they certainly dream fancifully of what they'd do with some of its $3.7 billion annual budget. In fact, Brother Mike knows what he'd do: "I'd put 'em out of business tomorrow," he said, snapping his fingers. Brother John

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shared the resentment: "Personally, I have no use for the Board." Bishop Moore was more conciliatory. St. Charles, he said, offers education "in a way that's better than the public schools." Moore, a product of the public schools (he attended them through junior high) was sensitive to the mandate of the public schools to educate *all* students, from the well-behaved to those with severe discipline records. "I just react," he said, "that we are the only ones doing a good job. They [the public schools] have a problem and we've all got to help them."

The hard times of inner-city public schools have cast light on the success of their Catholic counterparts. In New York City, for example, a debate is currently underway over whether the public high school dropout rate is 37 percent (the Board of Ed figure) or 54 percent (the figure of a parents' monitoring group). All the while, the Board of Ed's cost per student at the elementary level is $4,415.

Comparisons of achievement are difficult, given the different types of students in the systems. One possible measure is the annual State Pupil Evaluation Test, given in the elementary schools in the third, fifth, and sixth grades. On those, students in non-public schools in New York City, more than 80 percent of which are Catholic, scored from eight to twenty-one points higher on reading, writing, and math than students in the public schools. The tests are given to all non-handicapped students.

Cooperation between the systems sometimes tends to the absurd. After the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the use of Chapter 1 funds for programs in parochial school buildings, in the summer of 1985 all sorts of arrangements were hatched. The program had sent Board of Ed teachers into schools like Our Lady of Sorrows for much needed help in guidance counseling, teaching English as a second language, and remedial work in math and reading. Crucifixes were removed from the rooms of instruction, and there was no talk of religion. When the ruling came down, the Board, which is legally required to provide the remedial help, first suggested that the Catholic school kids go to public schools for a remedial class, a prospect which terrified some parents although this arrangement has apparently worked in various places. Then vans were suggested, and the Board bought some. Now much of the remedial help is provided in vans parked on parochial school parking lots or on the streets out front. The students in need of help file out, but the teachers in the vans, perhaps in need of making a phone call, cannot file into the school building without stretching the law. In any case, the days of the van are numbered. "I think we've done all that we can with vans," said Brother Kearney. "We're moving onto other things." He added that the fallout from the Supreme Court decision has meant that "60 percent of the eligible students under the law, who are poor and who need help in math and reading, are not getting it."

For some parents, fear, more than anything, prompts them to send their children to Catholic schools. The Board of Ed itself notes that in 1985-86 there were 1,487 reported incidents of weapons possession and 1,629 reported assaults (assaults being fights, knifings, and shootings). "We have this same concern — safety," said Rose Rivera, who has a son in the third grade at Francis Xavier. But while inner-city Catholic schools may seem in places a haven from some of the violence of the public schools, they, too, must deal with their own discipline problems as well as the violence of the street, of television and movies, and, not infrequently, of home.

Students of Our Lady of Sorrows offered vivid descriptions of the neighborhood. "The main thing a few years back was the needle," Denise, an eighth-grader, said. "And now they be making crack and sniffing cocaine right in front of your face." Aaron, another eighth-grader, detailed the latest in local drugs: "bluestar," he said, something like angel dust, was now on the street, as were "blunts," cigars injected with cocaine, "willablunts," cigars injected with crack, and all sorts of candy that strange men offer you in the hope, Aaron said, of hooking you on the crack or coke inside it; many kids at the local junior high carried guns, "22 automatics mostly."

Many of the same problems afflict the area around St. Charles, where often kids cannot go out and play because of danger. Bishop Moore said that one of the struggles of the school was to overcome the students' own inclination to violence, a trait especially apparent over the last three to five years. "It's difficult to instill in our kids the Christian value that we must respect and love our neighbor, that we must not do harm. We've noticed that our children are becoming less nonviolent," he said.

Making moral decisions can get complicated easily on such crime-laden streets, especially because, the students say, pushers brazenly seek out children as couriers or clients, dangling money or dope before them. One way, amid the regular fare of classes, that the schools deal with this is an eight-week drug prevention program run by the New York City Police Department. Once a week an officer comes to the fifth and sixth grades to discuss decision-making. Mock scenes are set up. In one a St. Charles fifth-grader, playing "the kid," for $1,000 took a bag of unknown contents from a so-called Slick Rick. As he playfully headed toward the drop with one Big Joe, the officer just as playfully said, "All right, you're under arrest," spreading his hands high on the wall and his legs apart on the floor to shrieks from the class. Then the officer said: "All right, you know there's something wrong with this guy: How many guys you know named Slick Rick?"

The other way that schools deal with the turmoil of the street or, perhaps, of home, is a mix of the personal and spiritual. Many teachers and administrators said the greatest need of their students was for someone to listen to them (if possible, with more counselors), a situation brought on by having only one parent, who perhaps works, or two who work, or one or two who simply don't talk much with their kids.

Ms. Libia Carroll has seen the change in her sixteen years of teaching at Our Lady of Sorrows. "They want to hold onto you," the Spanish teacher said. "They hug you, they kiss you, they're very affectionate. Sometimes you don't have time between classes." Professor Coleman in a recent interview spoke of a similar concern: "Our main problem in the United States is that nobody pays attention to kids any longer."

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But beneath discipline, friendship, high standards, more homework, and a clear set of values, the schools have their spiritual bulwark. On Ash Wednesday, the pre-kindergarten through fifth grades at Our Lady of Sorrows headed into their church, built in 1867, for what Brother John called a paraliturgy. The dome of the church has paintings of the story of Our Lady of Sorrows. The side walls depict the heroics of Franciscan saints. On the wall behind the altar rests a grey, plaster pietá given to the parish years ago by the King of Bavaria.

After Annie, a pudgy student, had run onto the beige marble sanctuary to read loudly from Isaiah, and after Fr. Jack had spoken of the need to give things up and do good works, all the students were invited to write on a slip of paper some bad habit they wished to be free of. A fast murmur ensued. Then the slips were gathered, placed in a container on the altar, and burned. The children oohed and aahed and craned their necks in a sea of movement. Teachers tactically took up position between the biggest talkers. Then Brother John signaled for the final song. The murmuring turned into melody, if too quiet for the principal. "I don't hear you," he challenged after one verse. The children responded by finishing the song in a happy, half-shout: "Glory, glory, glory hallelujah, children of the Lord!"

SCREEN

A SENSE OF PLACE

'TIN MEN' & 'HOOSIERS'

Tin Men and *Hoosiers* represent the best of a new media trend: lyrical regionalism. Lesser examples include *Night of Day* (about a troubled brother and sister who turn to rock careers in Cleveland), *Billy Galvin* (the story of a Boston construction worker and son), *True Stories* (David Byrne's look at Texas eccentricities, including the taste for astroturf jackets), and even Jim Jarmusch's bittersweet views of Cleveland in *Stranger than Paradise* and of New Orleans in *Down by Law*. TV increasingly uses specific locale: *Spenser for Hire* (based on Robert Parker's mysteries set in Boston), *Jack and Mike* (the yuppie comedy/thriller set in Chicago), and the brave women's detective show *Cagney and Lacey* (which heavily uses Queens). All these are marked by affection for locale that never degenerates, à la Woody Allen, to denigration of other parts of the country.

Tin Men's strength lies in writer-director Barry Levinson's knowing, loving use of his Baltimore setting. Having employed the same regional detail in the masterly *Diner* (1982), in *Tin Men* Levinson proves you can go home again, this time to regale us with tales from the adult side of the same diner's booths. His plot concerns aluminum siding salesmen at the peak of their influence and chicanery in the early 1960s, before their novel sales methods were regulated by a local ethics commission. Stealing a page from David Mamet's portraits of white-collar crime, Levinson doesn't romanticize his anti-heroes; they are definitely unethical. But also, he insists, likable.

In most cases, Levinson is convincing, and especially so with one of his stars, Richard Dreyfuss. But the co-star, Danny De Vito, poses several problems. Like Rodney Dangerfield and other pop comics, De Vito specializes in obnoxiousness without the leaven of wit; the result is often flat vulgarity. At times in *Tin Men* Levinson handles De Vito so well that the character even provokes pity for his boorish aggressiveness. Dreyfuss and De Vito have a car accident, and, when each blames the other, start a steadily escalating feud. Dreyfuss, a bachelor, aims at what he thinks is the ultimate revenge, stealing De Vito's wife, played by Barbara Hershey. Some rough, sexist scenes follow, redeemed by the ironic twist that Dreyfuss actually falls in love with Hershey. Levinson plots this tale of feud and romance against the larger issues of the legal regulation of the tin men; at times he manages a soft fusion of comedy, romance, and nostalgia—only to have De Vito's comedic broadsword shred the delicacy of the director's vision. Was Levinson unable to get this film past studio heads without blunting his irony with stupidity?

Tin Men's supporting cast illustrates perfectly the film's strengths and weaknesses. Dreyfuss and De Vito both have partners (John Mahoney and Jackie Gayle), distinguished minor actors who have paid their dues in off-Broadway theater, nightclubs, and quality films. Levinson matches Dreyfuss with the moody, sweetly melancholy Mahoney, and De Vito with the jokester Gayle, wisely choosing the concept of teamwork over contrast. Mahoney plays an old pro tin man who embodies both huckster wisdom and pathos: the saddest scene in the film occurs when he suffers a heart attack during a sale, and then curses his failure to get the customer's signature. Gayle gets off funny lines, especially about *Bonanza* and other sixties shows. But often they seem thrown in with no dramatic reference to the plot. Perhaps Levinson just has too much to say.

Tin Men is both rich and uneven, a stylish and ambitious film that doesn't quite know its own mind or market. But its merit is evident from the opening credits shaped like chrome brand-names on the sides of late fifties cars. At one point Levinson provides a gorgeous photograph of Dreyfuss embracing Hershey in a slinky black slip, like Liz Taylor in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. The shot itself is worth five current films.

Hoosiers is an unashamedly corny tale of the high school basketball team of Hickory, Indiana, nicknamed the Huskers. Starring Gene Hackman, Barbara Hershey (again), and Dennis Hopper, *Hoosiers* has enough health and heartiness to fill a 4-H club. Its strength is not subtlety: an early clue occurs just after the opening sequence of credits as Hackman drives his forties Dodge into town. Director Michael Anspaugh provides the earnestly obvious subtitle: "Indiana, 1951."

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Hackman plays a fierce coach returning to the profession after ten years of disbarment for striking a player in New York. He finds a team which, like himself, is in desperate need of redemption. It is both short-sized and short-handed, without its star player, who is depressed after the offseason death of the old coach. Will the new coach and team overcome such obstacles? Or rally from an opening string of losses? Will they convince the town's know-it-all nay-sayers? Will the team ultimately win the Big One? As noted, subtlety is not *Hoosiers*' strong point.

Nevertheless, the film has real strengths, above all acting which invigorates sentimentality with conviction. Hackman aptly catches the coach's conflict between humane leadership and manic desire to win. As a teacher protecting both the academic and emotional well-being of the star who won't play, Hershey is good despite having to trek the old route from hatred for the coach to respect and inevitable romance. Her agent has cornered the nostalgia market, and both here and in *Tin Men* she uses her sultry but ragged look to fit a bittersweet mood. Hopper got an Oscar nomination for his role as the town drunk, and is especially compelling when lost in his memories of missing a key shot and losing the Big One way back when.

Anspaugh is brave to tackle Hopper's alcoholism, which Hackman tries to cure by hiring him as an assistant coach in one more redemption scheme. Anspaugh is braver yet in leaving Hopper's story unresolved. It would have been similarly brave to explore the pyschology of losing the Big One.

Hoosiers could have been novel in other ways. At first, it sticks close to its subject. Hackman tries to teach his charges that shooting is the least important part of the game to practice; he preaches fundamentals—passing, rebounding, defense—and drills the players to death with them. He stresses team play, and at first the film documents that complicated, disciplined reality. But the screenplay calls for too many close, last-minute wins. Anspaugh's camera focuses on too many scoring shots. Indeed, the last sequence betrays the teamwork that Hackman labored so hard to teach.

Of course some viewers hate sports films, convinced of a link between athletic competition and proto-fascism. But graceful winning and losing are important, and, from the first Periclean gymnasia, have been pursued liberally. Divorcing sports and ethics has not led to an increase in ethics, but to recruiting scandals, the kidnapping of college athletes, and an obsession with being "number one." We don't need fewer sports films, but better ones. *Hoosiers*' mixed success with themes of victory and virtue place it between *Chariots of Fire* and *Rocky I* (a series now degenerated to *Over the Top*).

Hoosiers' use of religion sums up its problems. Anspaugh photographs his gyms to resemble churches, with emphatic shafts of light pouring down from high vertical windows. But the film's best small touches involve the parson's son, whose long prayers before games are treated with gentle irony. A fine moment occurs when Hackman, the gnarled unbeliever, actually stops and listens late in the film. The motif is stronger for not being underlined.

Regionalism in *Hoosiers* is not as strong as in *Tin Men* or *Breaking Away*—a biking film that used Indiana granite mines and prairies to great advantage. But places like Deerlick, Oolitic, Cedar Knob, and people like Opal and Cletus give *Hoosiers* a strong local habitation and down-home names. The whole nation plays basketball, but Indiana carries a disproportionate weight, having given the sport its best (Larry Bird) and worst (Indiana coach Bobby Knight, whose Tartar antics are covered in the best seller, *On the Brink*). Too bad *Hoosiers* ignored the dark side.

TOM O'BRIEN

BOOKS

A report card sure to provoke

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HIGH SCHOOLS
James S. Coleman and Thomas Hoffer
Basic Books, $24.95, 268 pp.

John Ratté

In the four years since the publication of the report *A Nation at Risk,* some thirty studies have identified, largely through summative evaluations, what is wrong with America's schools — and more recently, colleges. Some of the reports, particularly those coming from the states, are programs for change. They embrace every area of educational activity, from subjects to methods and from math to morals, from the micro-behavior of the classroom to the macro-behavior of the school system. The two most prominent current thrusts in the movement are the focus on teaching as a profession, sharpened by the Holmes and Carnegie reports, and the efforts of the state legislatures to mandate improvement by prescribed programs of study. Throughout, assessment is the turnkey phenomenon: if you know what's happening, you know what to change either in the behavior of students, or in the behavior of teachers and administrators. In all, little attention has been given to the matters of culture and social setting — or to the motivations of families.

The first "Coleman Report" was one of the most controversial summative assessments of the impact of public and private high schools on students. The study *High School and Beyond* collected data on performance, as measured by na-

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tionally used objective tests from a number of students whose cultural and socio-economic background was also defined in the inquiry. The results, reported in *High School Achievement* in 1982, showed that even when background was factored out, Catholic schools, and to a lesser degree, other private schools, did a better job for all their students.

In this new study, there is much grist for the mills of the mavens of educational measurement. The authors present their analyses of data on changes in performance from the tenth to twelfth grades, and on success in gaining admission to college, in college, and afterwards. The work is orderly: methods are described, likely conclusions are projected, the data are summarized in charts and in clear prose, and the conclusions are drawn, mostly in conformity to the hypotheses. But there are some surprises.

Catholic schools again demonstrate better results on most indicators. As in the earlier work, the authors argue that "the achievement growth benefits of Catholic school attendance are especially strong for students who are in one way or another from disadvantaged family backgrounds." Drop-out rates are lower in Catholic schools than those of both public and other private schools: indeed, the phenomenon of middle-class drop-out is more pronounced in the non-Catholic private (but not "high-performance") schools than in the public schools. "The absence in the other private schools of a community base to provide the social integration which protects against middle-class drop-outs and supports the educational demands of the school is a result which was just as unexpected as the very strong protective effect provided by the Catholic schools."

The public school ox was gored by the first Coleman report, and we can expect cries of pain from the private school ox as this work is read and debated. One way out is to inform parents quickly that *their* non-Catholic private school is the high-performance exception. Another is to ask to see the data, which is only summarized here, but will soon be picked over in the educational journals. Boarding schools, for instance, have higher participation in extracurricular activities, and that may account for better retention rates. Nor is it clear that the authors have taken into account the school's role in attrition decisions.

The questions generated by the conclusions are answered within the framework of a structure of theory which is set forth, in reasonable relationship to the data, in the first chapter. Schools serve either the state or the family. Public schools were once rooted in neighborhoods and local culture: they were "functional." Only Catholic schools, through the background ideology of belief and discipline, still provide such a functional community for the child. Private schools, by contrast, "constitute with few exceptions the extreme of individualism in education. The family acts individually, enrolling the child in a school that is not an outgrowth of a functional community, but one that collects children from a set of parents who have similar values and sufficient resources to implement these values."

The framework of theory expands at the end of the book. Moving from analysis and explanation to diagnosis and

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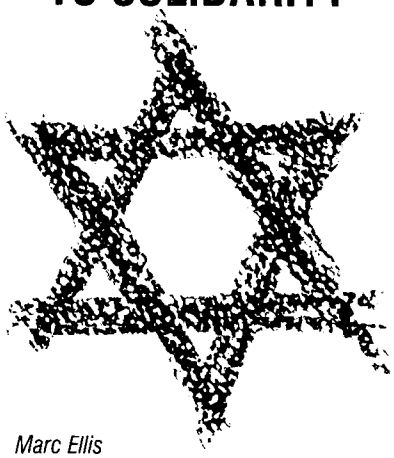

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prescription, the authors propose that the key to the malaise of all our schools lies in the failure of social capital, even in families where there is plenty of human capital — i.e., educated and successful parents. Social capital is generated by the relations among persons, and Catholic schools provide that capital because norms and sanctions grow in the religious communities which surround such schools. By contrast, again, the well-educated, but divorced, and/or professionally absorbed parent, with no functional (neighborhood) community, can buy good teachers and a strong curriculum, but cannot provide — nor can the school, which is but a congeries of other such parents — the networking which builds value. Alas, there is one powerful kind of social capital at work in schools: that created by the networking in a media- and consumption-dominated youth culture. It does not support reading, writing, and arithmetic.

What to do? The book ends with suggestions for parents, principals, and superintendents. Most bizarre — but curiously logical — is the notion that schools might well be centered in the workplace, since that is where the parents are. The more general prescription: work to strengthen social capital in schools through sports, activities, parental networking, and stronger relationships between students and teachers. Let there be vouchers — maybe; let there be more choices. But, above all, "encourage the growth of social structures that can provide the social capital important to a school." The young are at risk: if family, and the institutions which sprang from it, cannot do the work, the schools must.

REVIEWERS

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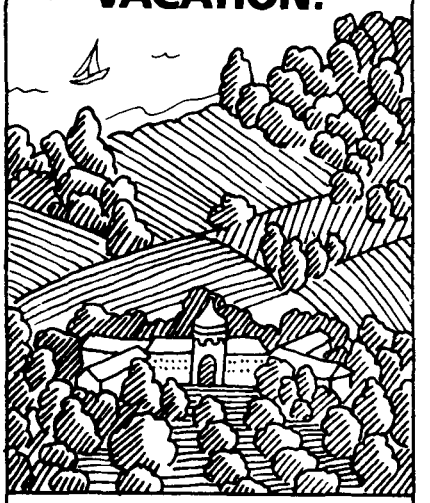

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WITH MALICE AFORETHOUGHT

THE JESUITS
THE SOCIETY OF JESUS AND THE BETRAYAL OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Malachi Martin

Linden Press /Simon and Schuster, $19.95, 525 pp.

Francis X. Murphy

In an attempt to do justice to Malachi Martin's *The Jesuits*, one is tempted to wonder whether the M.M. of the dust jacket is the Irish ex-Jesuit novelist and semiticist who, during the first session of Vatican II, served as Cardinal Agostino Bea's English language aide. As was said of one of his previous books, Malachi Martin could not have been the author since he knew so much better.

In dealing with the current offering, there comes to mind the English Jesuit, Herbert Thurston's review of a book on the medieval church by a renowned English historian, G.C. Coulton. "There's a major error on every page," wrote the erudite Jesuit and, when challenged, proved it.

With malice aforethought, Martin sets out to denigrate the Society of Jesus. The book begins with the assertion: "A state of war exists between the papacy and the religious Order of the Jesuits." What is so exasperating about his pursuit of this mendacious thesis is the fact that writing about the origin of the Society and the Ignatian concept, Martin is at times devoutly illuminating in his appraisal of Jesuit spirituality and the earlier history of the Company.

Discarding the historical method to which he was surely exposed in his study of Semitic languages at Louvain, Martin joins the new breed of mischief-makers writing about the Catholic church that runs from the *Vatican Connection* and

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the *Popessa* to *Pontiff* and *In the Name of God* — a series of irresponsible "exposés" of recent church happenings concocted of inaccuracies, falsifications, unverifiable quotations, and juvenile imaginings that masquerade as truth and historical fact.

Vatican II had encouraged the religious orders to update their constitutions by accommodating their evangelization efforts to the needs of today's world, while returning to the spiritual fervor of their founders. In their 1974-75 Congregation or revisionary caucus, the Jesuits turned their attention to the "option for the poor," meaning the pursuit of justice and human rights as a principal objective of their evangelization efforts. In so doing they had the fullest encouragement of their Superior General, Fr. Pedro Arrupe, whose Christian commitment had been annealed by his apocalyptic experience of the atom bomb at Hiroshima. It had turned him into an "apostle of the absolute" who preached an "Ignatian radicalism."

At the same time, Jesuits around the world were engaged in new approaches to theology, new adventures in religious life, new directions in their apostolates. Not all these pursuits were prudent or spiritually valid. With the post-conciliar exodus of priests from the ministry, many to marry, Jesuits proved as volatile as others. Some nine thousand clerics left the Society. Roman reaction was far from complacent; and in Pope Paul's addresses to the Society, he frequently issued rather harsh admonitions.

Within the Society itself there were threats of secession from Arrupe's control; and when, at the 1974-75 Congregation, the fourth vow of obedience to the Holy Father was challenged as giving rise to an elite group within the Society — some 30 or 40 percent of the priests who were then available for positions as superiors — the attempt to democratize the Society's hierarchical structure met with strenuous opposition from Pope Paul. It led to his summoning Fr. Arrupe for a dressing-down.

There has always been room in the church for tension between the papacy and the religious orders. Despite their special vow of obedience to the pope, Jesuit history is full of tug-o'-wars between the Society and the Holy Father.

Malachi Martin's circuitous depiction of the current struggles between the Society and both Popes Paul VI and John Paul II does little justice to the present difficulties. Instead, he calumniates most of the actors in the present dramatic happenings. Item: Of Pope Paul he says: "His churchly institution is split by heresy and schism and seems to be out of control." Item: He accuses Fr. Robert Drinan of supporting the pro-choice position on abortion; Fr. Arthur McGovern of supporting the Marxist class struggle; Fr. Luis Segondo of supplying Fr. James Carney with revolutionary idealism; Fr. Alvaro Arguello of equating Christianity and political upheaval; and Fr. James O'Malley of attempting to destroy the basis of religious truth. In each instance, he distorts the significance of the pursuit of the ideals of Vatican II by these Jesuit thinkers and activists.

Martin indicts Modernism — the attempt to update the church's perennial teachings in the spirit of the age — as the principal enemy perverting the post-conciliar church. He credits the English Jesuit, George Tyrrell and the French speculative theologian, Teilhard de Chardin, as well as a cabal of Jesuits including the present leadership with pursuing this objective despite the opposition of the popes and the Vatican curia. He credits the breakdown of Jesuit loyalty to the Holy Father to the attitude of Fr. Pedro Arrupe, removed from the office of Superior General by the direct intervention of Pope John Paul II. He accuses Arrupe and his cohorts of supporting liberation theology despite, in his opinion, its condemnation by Cardinal Ratzinger and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Martin has no love for the eminent German Jesuit, Karl Rahner (recently deceased); nor does he have much respect for Pope Paul whom he describes as "tearful, fearful, and indecisive." He feels that John Paul II "reigns but does not govern" because of his failure to curb Jesuit rebellion ruthlessly.

Martin does recognize the surprising fact that when the pope interfered in the Society's governance by removing Fr. Arrupe from office and substituting the seventy-nine-year-old, semi-blind Fr. Paolo Dezza, he discovered that "blood is thicker than water." Instead of the house-cleaning that everyone expected, Dezza did his best to protect the Arrupian image. Typical of the esprit of the Society, when some 1200 delegates assembled in Rome for the 1983 Congregation to elect a new Superior General, on the first ballot without previous caucusing, they selected a Dutch Jesuit, Fr. Peter

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Hans Kolvenbach as their new leader. A man well acquainted with Roman ways, he immediately undertook to implement what Malachi Martin derisively terms Arrupism.

One of Martin's more annoying inventions is his verbatim descriptions of scenes and discussions in the inner sanctum of the Vatican or the higher echelons of Jesuit government. He describes, for example, a fictitious seance of seven curial cardinals discussing the advisability of suppressing the Society altogether. He recreates the session between Pope Paul and Fr. Arrupe toward the end of the 1974-75 Congregation in which the Holy Father had his assistant, Archbishop Giovanni Benelli, read the General a dressing-down for his failure to control the delegates who favored a reorganization of the Society's structure. Martin describes this as a violent back-and- forther in which the pope and the archbishop almost hysterically demanded Arrupe's immediate resignation and in which the mild-mannered Jesuit obstinately refused. No such exchange took place.

In the overall picture, Malachi Martin touches on practically all the major problems troubling the church and the Society today and manages to misrepresent both actors and situations with careless abandon. Instead of indulging a *saeva indignatio* based on fact that could have given the book Jesuitical panache, he provides a mendacious and repetitious scurrility. *Caveat lector.*

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 194)

sexuality. To restrict the expressions of such an intense, deeply attached part of one's being to the procreation of the species is simply bad theology. The "domino theory" that the practice of artificial contraception will, ipso facto, lead to fornication, dissolved marriages, abortion, and sodomy is ludicrous! As an aside, does he know that some homosexuals do not practice sodomy and some heterosexuals do? What does that do to his theory? This dimly held view of sexual expression for reasons other than carrying on the species — a view held by so very many in the church borders — is pathological. If the Vatican were as eager to preach the Gospel as it is to ensure that sex is for breeding, the possibilities would be mind-boggling.

I was willing to groan on through his artificial segue from birth control to impending Armageddon until I came to these comments: "Like a loving and gentle parent the Vatican has, over the intervening years, sought to encourage Fr. Curran. . . . Instead, Father Curran moved further away from his church. . . ." One can accuse the Vatican of many things, but being loving and gentle with Charles Curran . . . get real! Mr. Hale seems to feel a need to identify "the church" with "the Vatican." Is it still necessary to fight that old fight in 1987?

Last but certainly not least, how has Father Curran "forfeited the right to continue as a priestly agent of that [i.e., his] church"? No one has a *right* to be a "priestly agent." All Christians, by virtue of their baptism into the church (*not*

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into the Vatican but the people of God), have the joy and pleasure of ministry and mission, some in the specially called-out status of ordained minister following a tried and tested call from God to be a servant of the servants of God. The sooner this top down view of church structure is finally and completely rooted out, the better for the church. Then we can be about the business of preaching the Word and developing a more life-affirming view and theology of sexuality. Father Curran isn't perfect . . . nor even right all the time (I'm sure that's no surprise to him), but he deserves better than he got from the Vatican. He *has* gotten it (". . . Father Curran arguably won") from the church. JIM McCREA

Curran's consequences

Park Ridge, Ill.

To the Editors: John P. Hale's analysis of how a misstep in logic can lead to a viper's nest of unintended consequences doesn't waste a word in pinpointing the problem with Charles Curran's theology.

What many of the modern theologians are doing is to substitute human reason for the easily comprehended Gospel message. When one doubts the validity of revelation, one has only logic to bolster his position. E.F. HALPIN

The author replies:

Hold on, folks! Just line up one at a time in a nice orderly fashion. That's it. Now:

To Theresa Lettieri: I agree that an inclination to sodomy is not a mental disease. But neither are inclinations to laziness, larceny, or lying. The existence of the inclination, however, does not justify laziness, larceny, or lying. Neither does it justify engaging in sodomy.

My suggestion for husbands who batter their wives is that the husbands get a dose of battering themselves, judicially administered. Having thus gotten their attention, one should carefully explain to them the moral burden they carry in dealing with their wives.

To Marshall Ellet: If we have been misled as to what Father Curran has used his pulpit to teach, I think that the burden of clarification must rest with Father Curran. I'm prepared to give him an attentive ear.

To Mitchell Keller: You ask if I am prepared to charge Father Curran with responsibility for the federal deficit and trade imbalance? Not at this point . . . But some economists might research the question of what effect a falling birth rate has on the economic health of a highly industrialized society, as the demand for consumer goods contracts and the median age of the population moves upward. I might then reconsider my position.

I agree with Monsignor Basler in his use of "chaos" and "confusion" in describing the current state of moral theology.

I plead guilty to Jim McCrae's charge that I identify the Roman Catholic church with the Vatican.

Lastly, for the kind words of Mr. Halpin, I am appreciative.

JOHN P. HALE

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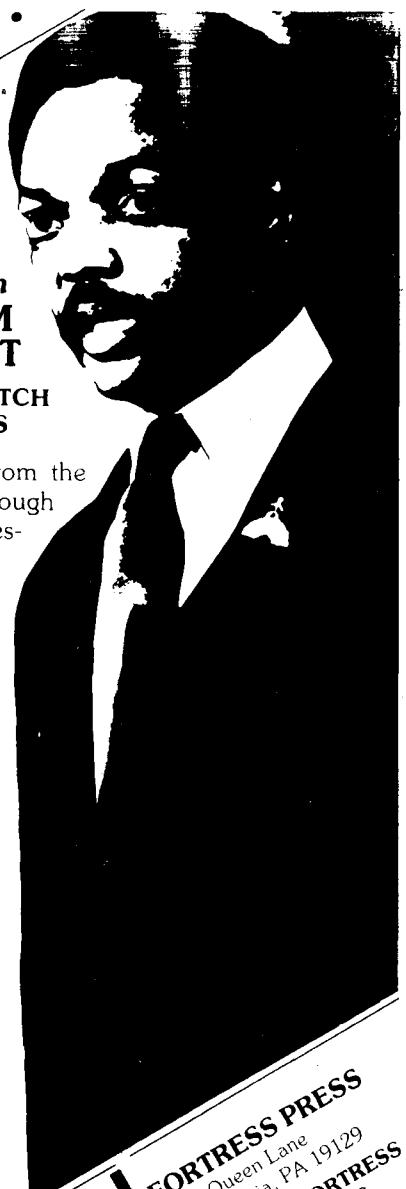

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